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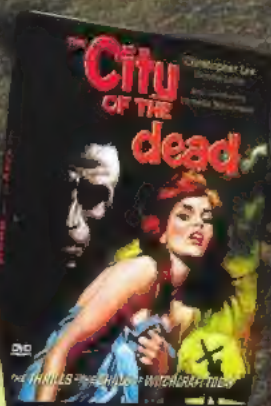
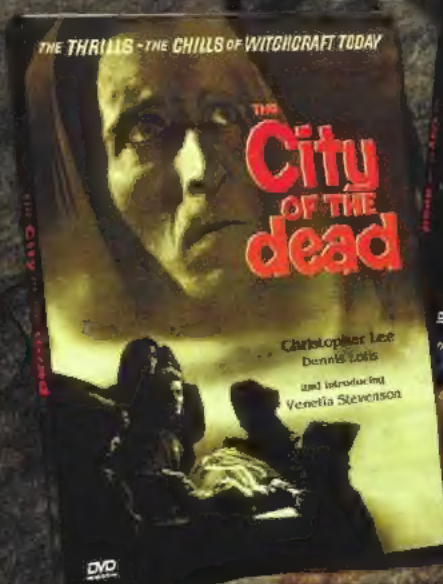
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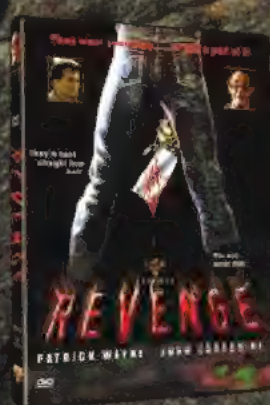
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COVER: Boris Karloff in **THE BLACK ROOM** (1935) and  
Bela Lugosi in **NIGHT OF TERROR** (1933), by Bill Chancellor



# Scarlet Letters

I read *Scarlet Street* #42 all in one sitting, which, with a mag as jam packed as *Scarlet Street*, is a long sitting!

The first thing I turn to in any magazine is the letters page and SCARLET LETTERS never disappoints. This issue's letters column was especially exciting, what with letters from producer Richard Gordon and director Willard Carroll. THE NEWS HOUND is another favorite, and Mr. Hound (John J. Mathews) was informative and amusing, as always.

Lelia Loban is one of my favorite *Scarlet Street* writers, so this issue (like the last) was a special treat. Her article on *She Who Must Be Obeyed* was wonderful, and her work with Richard Valley on THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY is a revelation. Not only that, but the interview with dancer Dennis Wayne and his stories about playing Dorian in the ballet and almost being murdered (not for playing Dorian!) made for fascinating reading. And leave it to *Scarlet Street* to actually come up with some information about the elusive David Peel, Hammer Horror's Man of Mystery!

I'm never going to be invited to a dinner party with Hurd Hatfield, Elizabeth Shepherd, and Curtis Harrington (especially now with Mr. Hatfield dead!), so I was pleased writer David Del Valle invited us all by proxy in his delightful article. I can always count on Kevin Shinnick to give his best, and his interview with Hammer star Shane Briant was tops! Kudos, too, to Mark Clark's interview with Robert Tinnell, and anything else I may have missed. I'm just so impressed!

Barbara Gibson  
Paramus, NJ

Thanks so much for the article in the new *Scarlet Street*. I'm really pleased with it and super happy you ran the photo of myself with Stephen King and George Romero from my long-gone youth.

Bob Tinnell  
McHenry, MD

I love, love, love the new look of the cover on *Scarlet Street* #42! Not that I hated the old ones . . . but change keeps things alive and fresh.

My favorite article this issue was the SHE article by Lelia Loban. I'm always fascinated to read all the background history surrounding a film. It's great to see how a story has evolved and changed under various productions. My favorite interview was Kevin G. Shinnick's interview with Shane Briant. Mr. Shinnick always asks interesting questions and gets the stars to talk freely and openly. Kudos to Ms. Loban and Mr. Shinnick and the rest of the *Scarlet Street* staff! I eagerly look forward to the next issue.

Lisa MaMoone  
Rochester, NY

*Scarlet Street* #42—another issue, another triumph! You really are going from strength to strength. I look forward to each new issue with the feverish enthusiasm and electrified excitement of a child anticipating Christmas. And just like the ever reliable Mr. Claus, *Scarlet Street* always delivers and never disappoints! I've been with you from day one and never missed an issue—nor do I intend to, and that's the way it's gonna stay!

Love the new logo, incidentally. Very striking. Nothing else needs changing, though—well, you can't improve on perfection, now, can you?—so please, please, don't go tampering with anything else. You've got the blend absolutely right with your simply superb assemblage of regular features and articles, a variety that is as stunningly attractive as it is wonderfully entertaining.

One wee suggestion: how about an article on the terrors of Tigon? The crackling little company that turned out such electrifying genre shockers as WITCH-FINDER GENERAL (1968) and BLOOD ON SATAN'S CLAW (1970) is all too often shamefully ignored in favour of the (admittedly awesome) offerings of Hammer and Amicus.

Peter Benassi  
Lanarkshire, Scotland

*Tigon and Amicus aren't on the current schedule, Peter, but rest assured, we'll get around to them. As the Wicked Witch of the West once said, "All in good time . . ."*



I entered the creaking iron gates of *Scarlet Street* with Issue #41, labored by the question, "How has this mag been getting past me?" This time the impasioned glitter of its glossy Gothic cover drew my eye. I flipped through the excellent Dorian Gray piece and noted how many features there were throughout the issue on themes that have captivated me as a film student in recent years. The scope of the features and obvious personal fondness for the material shown by your staff got me hooked and you've recruited a new dedicated reader.

It was because of your feature that I discovered SHE and H. Rider Haggard. (I've always known about the novel, but I never read it, so I ran out and rented both the thirties film version and the later Hammer version to compare them.) It was because of you that I discovered the shooting/dubbing techniques used in the old Italian horror films. (One old black-and-white import called CASTLE OF BLOOD scared the hell out of me on the tube when I was around 10. Filled with corny clichés, it nevertheless fascinated me because the entire film was shot in so much blackness.)

I definitely look forward to reading material on Sherlock Holmes and hope to learn new things on the subject—which will be tough because I know a lot. Of the cinematic Sherlocks, I have to confess Basil Rathbone remains my favorite. Outside of Rathbone, Jeremy Brett and Robert Stephens hold my highest regard.

I'd like to submit a suggestion for a very detailed feature on H.G. Wells. I am awed by the man's abundant imagination. I discovered him in childhood and instantly became attached. The power of his vision and his eloquence only enhanced my appreciation of his books as I got older. He can be experienced on so many levels—there's something new to discover each time you read his stories. He is also taken for granted: many people are unaware of how many archetypes in science fiction he had created. There are the obvious ones like time travel, alien invasions, and invisibility but he is also responsible for such SF concepts as traveling to alternate dimensions, suspended animation, and genetic engineering. His prose was forceful and mellifluous and often majestic, yet heavily satirical, much of it threaded with dark humor. In mod-

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Tommy Bond

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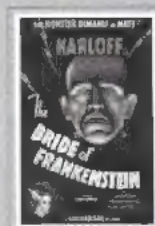
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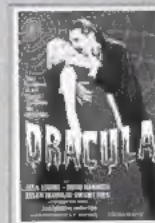
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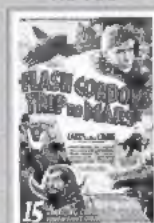
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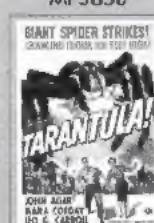
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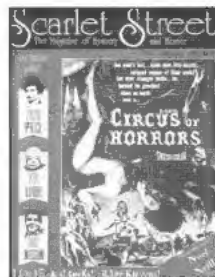
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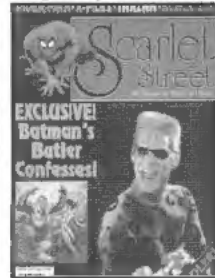
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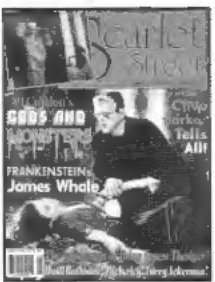
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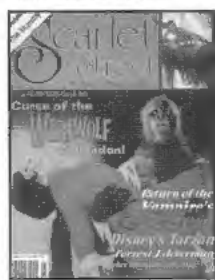
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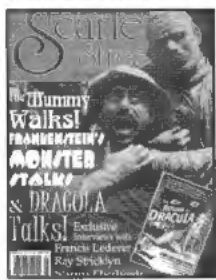
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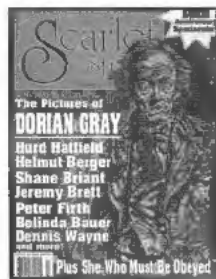
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**COUPLES ONLY\*** (1955) Peter Lorre, Barbara Hale, Bill Williams, Robert Quarry. This is quite simply one of the best sci-fi rediscoveries in the history of Sinister Cinema. It is also quite possibly Peter Lorre's most fantastic role. Williams and Hale play a married couple living in an unusual apartment building maintained by the strange, eccentric Lorre. What is his mysterious secret? What are the strange mechanisms he has hidden in the basement? How is he able to seemingly see from behind without turning his head? The end of this film is a real shocker. The creepy scene where Hale encounters Lorre in a dark basement hallway is really cool. Any, and we mean ANY fan of '50s sci-fi/horror will want to add this forgotten gem to their collection. Our tremendous thanks to the private individual who made this half-hour classic available. 16mm. Also, **WAY STATIONS IN SPACE** (1960) For good measure we've thrown in this nifty little sci-fi documentary dealing with the possibilities of building space stations that orbit high above the Earth. There's some really cool early '60s animation involving rocket ships and space stations. As a segue, we've also sandwiched in a full drive-in intermission between our two shows. Color, 16mm. \$230

**THE DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE\*** (1971) Enka Blum, Jean Servais, Daniel Emilfork, Ivana Novak, Shirley Corigan. If you liked *Lorelei's Grasp* from last year's bumper crop, you'll absolutely love *The Devil's Nightmare*. It's a great 'monster in a castle' movie. A small busload of tourists spends the night in the creepy castle of the Baron Von Rumberg, himself an alchemist (he's got a cool dungeon lab). Another guest arrives, a beautiful young woman who is really a succubus. As the night lingers, she begins to kill off the tourists in horrific fashion. Blum, as the succubus, is stunningly beautiful, yet when she transforms, her face becomes one of the scariest female monster faces we've ever seen. Emilfork is perfect as the Devil—what great casting. This film is rated R for violence and nudity. There is a nude lesbian love scene, so please keep this from the kids. Highly Recommended. Color, from 35mm. H292

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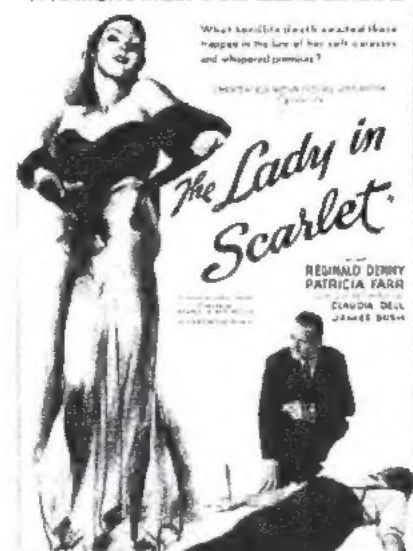


**DEVIL'S  
NIGHTMARE**  
will leave it's MARK on you!

**ESCAPE FROM SAIGON** (1966) Jean Chevrier, Fivos Razi, Barbara Laage, Andre Versini. This is a very good jungle action movie! In the black of the night, two gunrunners see a plane crash into the Vietnamese jungle. The lone survivor is an electronics scientist who has perfected a new device that will detect and destroy all intercontinental ballistic missiles! Needless to say, there is a big price on his head. Can the two gunrunners be counted on to return him to safety or will they sell him to the highest bidder? Further complicating matters is the arrival of the scientist's wife. An oriental warlord chases them across the jungle with danger at every turn. Mercenaries, ancient temples, dangerous jungle trails, and secret caves are just a few of the things featured in this lively jungle thriller. Filmed on location in the hot, steamy jungles of South Vietnam. Recommended. From 16mm. J064

**THE LADY IN SCARLET\*** (1935) Chesterfield Reginald Denny, Patricia Farr, Dorothy Revier, Claudia Dell, James Bush, Law Kelly. An antique dealer is plain! Lying next to his body is a bloody rapier. There is also a jewel-crusted dagger stabbed through his right hand, pinning it into the hardwood floor. A high-class detective and his wisecracking secretary stumble onto the case and find themselves surrounded by danger from a variety of possible suspects. Together with the police, they go after the killer. Chesterfield, the king of poverty row mysteries, made his whodunit, and it's easy to see how they gained their reputation. There's lots of snappy patter, plenty of mysterious clues, and a ton of offbeat murder suspects. Denny is excellent as the Nick Charles-style detective, but Farr (who was on loan-out from 20th Century Fox) nearly steals the show as his witty, smooth-talking secretary. The rest of the cast shines as well. We try to come out with at least one outstanding poverty row murder mystery every fall, this one's our pick for this year. Transferred from a beautiful 16mm original print. \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling & postage. M315

A NATION'S MOST TANTALIZING CRIMINAL



Starring  
**CHRISTOPHER LEE • MARIA PERSCHY**

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**CASTLE OF FU MANCHU\*** (1972) Christopher Lee, Maria Perschy, Richard Greene, Tsai Chin, directed by Jess Franco. A luxury cruise liner is sunk in the Caribbean by an iceberg? Guess who's behind it? That's right, Fu Manchu, who possesses an almost-perfected super weapon that can cause large bodies of water to freeze. His plan is to blackmail the world into submission and his next target is the Black Sea near Istanbul. He takes over the castle of an opium lord (opium crystals are needed for his weapon) and then kidnaps the one scientist who can help complete his weapon. Will Nayland Smith (Greene) intercede before it's too late? Lots of cool laboratory scenes. Chin, as Lee's faithful daughter, is a REAL viper! Wow. Look for the scene where she wracks off the governor's head. Not high art, but certainly lots of fun. Looks and plays like a James Bond movie. Definitely recommended. Nice print. Color, from 35mm. \$133

**ORIENTAL EVIL** (1951) Byron Michie, Martha Hyer, Tetsu Nakamura, Herky Okawa. Another rarity surfaces! (By finding this in a reference book) This forgotten fantasy thriller is set in Tokyo. Hyer is an American woman looking for the dastardly opium runner responsible for the death of her brother. She becomes surrounded by an assortment of furtive characters, including a tall, smooth-talking Brit, who seems hell bent on helping her but actually has ulterior motives of his own. What follows is a web of intrigue laced with a sinister oriental flavor. Adding a wonderful twist to the story is a weird supernatural being who oversees the lives of all involved, and is only visible to those he has marked for death! Watch for a wicked inspiring scene near the end of the film. A few spicily spots, but overall not bad. Recommended. From 16mm. F029





**SON OF CLEOPATRA\*** (1965) Mark Damon, Silla Gabel, Alberto Lupo, Arnoldo Foà. This is an outstanding sword and sandal movie. Damon plays the son of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra. As a baby, he escapes death from Octavian's soldiers. As a grown man, he becomes the leader of a wild desert tribe that helps the suppressed people of Egypt. Known as "El Kabir," he leads his fellow Egyptians in revolt against the cruel Roman governor, whose daughter he kidnaps and makes captive. The Romans hatch a counterplot to retrieve the girl and capture El Kabir. This exciting epic tries to make a link between itself and the Taylor/Fox *Cleopatra*. Recommended. Color. from 18mm. \$3119.

**ENTER THE DEVIL\*** (1972) Irene Kelly, Josh Bryant, David Cass, Carl Benson, Linda Rascoe. *Enter the Devil* is a well made, good old fashioned American B horror movie. It looks to have been shot in Texas. People are disappearing in the wastelands near the Texas-New Mexico border. An occult researcher (played by the beautiful Kelly) comes to a lonely mountain village and discovers that a Pentecost-style devil-worshipping cult may be responsible. Her investigations lead her into terrible danger. Who can she trust? There are a couple of horrific rat-on-skin scenes that bring to mind Arch Hall's gruesome death in *The Sadist*. Some of the human sacrifice scenes are not for the squeamish. This is basically a cast of unknowns, but they are all very good. Gritty and atmospheric. Definitely recommended. Color. 16mm. H293.



**JUNGLE MAN\*** (1961, aka *DRUMS OF AFRICA*) Buster Crabbe, Charlie Middleton, Sheila Darcy, Weldon Heyburn, Vince Barnett. It's amazing that this PRC jungle thriller hasn't been around before, but as far as we can tell, this is its first video release, and it's not half bad. Crabbe is a jungle doctor in an African village besieged by fever and marauding headhunters. Watch for the scene where he goes one on one with a ferocious lion. Meanwhile, Heyburn and Barnett are on safari looking for the lost city of the dead. They eventually find it, but are deserted by their native crew. Barnett is then attacked and almost killed by a giant snake. Lots of action and jungle thrills. One particularly grim scene has Middleton's pet tiger attacking a native headhunter. As cheap jungle thrillers go, this one's pretty good. 16mm. J062.

**I, MONSTER** (1971) Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Nika Raven, Chloe Walters. Although the critics haven't been too kind over the years, *I, Monster* is really kind of fun horror film. In another reworking of Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Lee plays the Jekyll character (now Dr. Marlowe) who experiments with a formula to bring out the evil in man. In one early scene, Lee injects his pet cat with horrifying results. Lee soon injects himself and becomes a raving monster who gets uglier and uglier each time he transforms. Cushing and Raven are fellow doctors who key in to the fact that something is horribly wrong. Color, from 16mm. \$224.

**COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY** (1967) George Addison, Horsi Frank, Pascale Audret. A glamorous journalist writes a series of articles blasting drug traffickers. Later, while sitting on a beach typing another explosive article, she is kidnapped! She is tied to an explosive device that will be detonated if demands aren't met! A top Interpol agent is called in to find her, save her life, and bring the drugs to justice. Lots of action in this really cool spy movie. Recommended. Color. 16mm. \$P82.

**POOR WHITE TRASH\*** (1957) Peter Graves, Lita Milan, Douglas Fowley, Tim Carey, Jonathan Haze. Graves plays a northern architect who comes to the aid of a 15-year old bayou girl against her illiterate, white trash father. Initially a box office bomb, this was a huge hit upon re-release in the early 1960s. Watch for the long intense sequence where the young girl is chased through the woods and slowly has her clothes ripped off by a lecherous male pursuer. It climaxes with her stumbling completely nude into a bog patch. She writhes through the mud as her pursuer approaches! A pretty intense scene for its time. *Poor White Trash* really succeeds in portraying the poor, southern bayou lifestyle. Watch for the hip-tying dance by the bad guy. It's an absolute scream. Even Elvis would have been jealous. 35mm. X103.



**SHADOW OF CHIKARA** (1977 aka *CURSE OF DEMON MOUNTAIN*) Joe Don Baker, Sandra Locke, Ted Neeley, Jay Houk, Jr., Slim Pickens. What a creepy movie. Starts out like *The Civil War* movie, ends up like *THE BLAIR BROTHER PROJECT*. Three Civil War vets hear from a dying soldier about a fortune in diamonds hidden in a cave atop a forbidden mountain. As they make their way through the woods, they realize they are being followed—but by what? One of the vets is a top Indian tracker who is baffled—and eventually frightened—over the fact that whatever is tracking them is never visible and leaves no discernable tracks. The further along they go, the creepier things get until finally a supernatural horror from beyond unleashes its wrath upon them. A great little American B chiller. Color, from 16mm. H296.

**LEGEND OF EIGHT SAMURAI** (1984) Hiroko Yakushimaru, Henry Sanada, Sonny Chiba. What a COOL movie! Eight mysterious crystals from the body of a long dead princess now identify the eight samurai who are destined to help a beautiful young princess overcome a curse on her royal family. They are pitted against an evil goblin queen who bathes in blood to retain her youthfulness. The queen and her son live in a castle protected by all kinds of cool monsters and apparitions (watch for the giant flying snakes). If you're a sword and sorcery fan, this one's a must, and we highly, highly recommend it. Color, from 35mm. F032.

**APPOINTMENT WITH FEAR** (1950) Betty Anne Davies, Sydney James, Anthony Forwood, Sheila Burrell. A rare Forgotten Horror style thriller. The setting, of course, is an old dark house that is supposedly haunted. A young woman, whose father died while performing a mysterious Yoga demonstration, has come to claim her father's estate. She's soon surrounded by numerous shady characters and ghosts(?) who are trying to drive her insane. Creepy and atmospheric. This rare British thriller is definitely worth a look. A few spicier spots, but overall not bad. Script by John Gilling, aka "Man in Black." Recommended 16mm. H288.



**HAPPY FUNERAL AMIGOS, IT'S SARTANA\*** (1971) Gianni Garko, Antonio Vilar, Daniela Giordano, Helga Line, Franco Ressel, George Wang. The Sartana character is a little different than most heroes in other spaghetti westerns. Instead of killing for revenge or money, he simply kills people because they deserve to die. In this interesting film, Sartana is after a corrupt banker in a small town who has caused all kinds of misery to the local townsfolk. This is a later Sartana film, but it captures much of the same flavor and atmosphere of the earlier entries into the series. Giordano is very charming as the sweet yet wicked niece of the banker. Recommended. Color. 16mm. SW34.

**JIMMY THE BOY WONDER** (1966) Dennis Jones, Nancy Jo Berg, David Bright. Directed by Herschell Gordon Lewis. Attention ALL bad film fans, although the competition is keen, we believe *Jimmy the Boy Wonder* may be the WORST film in the Sinister Cinema library. We started howling about 45 seconds after the opening titles. Some stupid little kid wishes time would stop so he won't have to go to school. A weird devil character grants his wish and everything comes to a standstill (watch the "frozen" people trying not to move). What follows is some of the worst acting and most insane special effects ever put on film. There's an astronomer wizard and his sickeningly sweet daughter who befriends the little crumb-crusher who started the whole mess and try to make things right again. They should have tarred and feathered him. Argh! These guys had to have been on drugs. Highly recommended! Color, from 16mm. F031.

**DIAGNOSIS: MURDER** (1975) Christopher Lee, Judy Geeson, Jon Finch, Jane Marrow. A fine crime thriller with Lee at the top of his game. Chris is an evil psychiatrist who, along with his secretary, plots to murder his wife. Will they get away with it? This fine suspense film boasts plenty of thrills and is aided by a strong cast and an intelligent, engaging script. One of Lee's better non-horror films. Lee himself once commented that he was "delighted at how good it was." Recommended. Color. 16mm. This title \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling & postage. M325.

**MOONCHILD\*** (1971) Victor Buono, John Carradine, Janet Landgard, Mark Travis. A young painter meets up with a talkative old man who talks about an assortment of odd things. He encourages the young man to go to a strange hotel. After checking in, the young man finds himself haunted by weird shadowy visions, some of which are sexual, many of which are horrific, even violent. There's also something very odd about the people at the hotel. The young man seems to know them, yet they're all strangers to him. What is the strange secret of the mysterious hotel, its inhabitants, and the moonchild? Truly bizarre and very good. A very unique film. Recommended. Color. 35mm. H290.



For more terrific Sinister Cinema titles, please go on to the next page!





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### SCIENCE FICTION

**COUPLES ONLY\*** (1955) Peter Lorre, Barbara Hale, Bill Williams. A top sci-fi rediscovery! Williams and Hale live in an unusual apartment building managed by the strange Lorre. What are the weird machines in his basement? How does he see behind without turning his head? What a climax! The scene where Hale encounters Lorre in a dark basement is creepy. A must for all '50s sci-fi fans. 26 min. Plus **WAY STATIONS IN SPACE** (1960) A fine sci-fi documentary about building space stations above Earth. Some cool '60s animation involving rockets and space stations. Between both shows is a drive-in intermission. Color. 16mm. \$230

**BLAST OFF\*** (1967) Burl Ives, Troy Donahue, Gert Frobe, Hermione Gingold, Daliah Lavi. An entertaining sci-fi comedy about P.T. Barnum teaming up with an eccentric German scientist to build a moon rocket. The first passenger will be Barnum's prize freak. Tom Thumb. Wiley saboteurs try to interfere. Color. 16mm. \$231

**ATTACK OF THE MONSTERS** (1959) Nobuhiko Kojima, Christopher Murphy, Miyoko Akizawa, Yuko Hamada. Two earth boys are kidnapped by an alien. Gamera, the flying turtle monster, flies to a distant planet to save them. There he battles Guron, a giant monster with a head shaped like a knife. Color. 16mm. \$232

**CASTLE OF FU MANCHU\*** (1972) Christopher Lee, Richard Greene, Maria Perschy, Tzar Chin, directed by Jess Franco. A cruise liner is sunk in the Caribbean by an iceberg? Fu Manchu possesses a super weapon that freezes large bodies of water. His plan is to rule the world and his next target is Istanbul. Plays like a James Bond film. Definitely recommended. Color. 35mm. \$233

**FREEDOM 2000** (1974) Richard Carlson, Ross Martin. Nifty short animated sci-fi film about aliens coming to Earth to study its capitalist ways. Carlson's last film. Light emission scratches. Color. 16mm. Also, **PIONEERS IN SPACE** (1963) Narrated by Frank Magee. A retelling of the Glenn and Carpenter space missions. Lots of real footage. The sequence about Glenn's heat shield is very engaging. There's a drive-in style intermission reel sandwiched between the shows. 16mm. \$234



### HORROR

**THE PHANTOM CREEPS\*** (1939) Bela Lugosi, Robert Kent, Dorothy Arnold, Regis Toomey, Edward Van Sloan. For all of you Lugosi fans who don't like sitting through 12-chapter serials, here's the feature version of the classic Universal serial, upgraded from a nice 16mm print. Bela, as the mad Dr. Zerk, vies for world domination with his invisibility element and his giant robot. H287

**APPOINTMENT WITH FEAR** (1950) Betty Anne Davies, Sydney James, Anthony Farnwood. A Foghorn Horror style thriller. The setting is a supposedly haunted house. A young lady, whose father died while giving a weird Yoga demonstration, has come to claim her estate. She is surrounded by sinister characters and ghosts(?) who are trying to drive her insane. Atmospheric. A tad spicier in spots, but not bad. Aka "Man in Black." 16mm. H288

**NIGHT, AFTER NIGHT, AFTER NIGHT** (1969) Jack May, Justine Lord, Gilbert Wynne. A weird Jack the Ripper type movie. A stern judge is really a kinky killer, slaying scores of beautiful women in gaily fashion. The husband of one of the victims is a policeman who sets out after the maniac. A little on the depraved side and not for the kids. Nudity and violence. Color. 16mm. H289

**MOONCHILD\*** (1971) Victor Buono, John Carradine, Janet Landgard, Mark Travis. A young painter checks into a strange hotel. There, he finds himself haunted by weird, shadowy visions. There's also something very odd about the people at the hotel. The young man seems to know them, yet they're all strangers to him. What is the strange secret of the mysterious hotel, its inhabitants, and the moonchild? Bizarre, but quite good. Color. 35mm. H290

**THE SUPREME IN HIGH ADVENTURE**  
**BLAST-OFF**  
BURLY TROY GERT HERMIONE LIONEL DALIAH  
IVES DONAHUE FROBE GINGOLD JEFFRIES LAVI

**I, MONSTER** (1971) Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Mike Raven. In another reworking of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, Lee is the Jekyll character (Dr. Moreau) who creates a potion to bring out the evil in man. Lee injects himself and becomes a raving monster who gets upser each time he transforms. Cushing and Raven are fellow doctors who know something is wrong. Color. 16mm. \$291

**THE DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE\*** (1971) Enka Blane, Jean Servais, Daniel Emilfork, Ivana Novak. Devil's Nightmare is a great 'monster in a castle' movie. Tourists spend the night in a creepy castle. Another guest arrives, a beautiful young woman who is really a succubus. She starts to kill them off in horrific fashion. Blane, as the succubus, has one of the scariest female monster faces we've ever seen. Highly recommended. Rated R for violence, nudity, and lesbian love scene. Color. 35mm. H292

**ENTER THE DEVIL\*** (1972) Irene Kelly, Josh Bryant, David Cass. Enter the Devil is a great American-made B horror movie. People are disappearing in the wastelands. An occult researcher discovers that a devil-worshipping cult is responsible. Her inquiries lead her into great danger. Who can she trust? Very well acted by a cast of unknowns. Gritty and atmospheric. Color. 16mm. H293

**VIRGIN AMONG THE LIVING DEAD** (1971) Robert Elston, Anita Walsh, Darryl Wells. A beautiful young woman travels to a mysterious castle after her father dies to hear the reading of his will. She is haunted by dreams of zombies chasing her. The other relatives in the castle are very "odd." Hmmm. The U.S. release version of this Jess Franco horror chiller. Color. from 16mm. H294

**TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD\*** (1972 aka BLIND DEAD) Caesar Burton, Lone Fleming. If you don't like reading subtitles, here's your chance to see the original English language version of this horror classic. Members of a weird cult are blinded by crows and put to death for sacrificing women. They return from the dead as marauding mummified skeletons on horseback in what is one of the best Euro horror movies ever made. Color. 35mm. H295

**SHADOW OF CHIKARA** (1977 aka CURSE OF DEMON MOUNTAIN) Joe Don Baker, Sandra Locke, Ted Neely, Joy Houli. Jr. Starts off like a Civil War movie, ends up like The Blair Witch Project. Three Civil War vets search for diamonds hidden atop a forbidden mountain. Weaving through the woods, they realize they are being followed—but by what? Whatever it is leaves no tracks. The further they go the creepier things get until a supernatural horror unleashes its wrath. Color. 16mm. H296

### SWORD & SANDAL

**LAST DAYS OF POMPEII\*** (1960) Steve Reeves, Christine Kaufmann, Fernando Rey. Reeves is a centurion who battles the high priest of Isis and an evil Roman mistress as they attempt to take control of the city of Pompeii. When Reeves' Christian girl pal is sentenced to death in the arena, he attempts to save her, only to have Mt. Vesuvius blow its top! Color. from 16mm. \$314

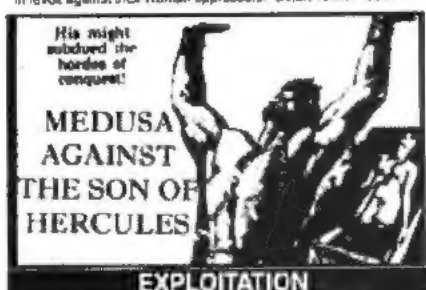
**ROMULUS AND THE SABINES** (1961) Roger Moore, Mylene Demongeot, Rosanna Schiaffino, Jean Marais. As Romulus, leader of Rome, Moore takes his lusty male followers to a nearby Sabine village where they proceed to carry off the Sabine women for their wives. This causes a bloody battle with the Sabine men. Aka "Rape of the Sabine Women." Color. 35mm. \$315

**MEDUSA AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES** (1962 aka Perseus the Invincible) Richard Harrison, Anna Real, Arturo Dommi. A beautiful color upgrade! Harrison was one of the most prolific of sword & sandal stars. As Perseus, he finds himself pitted against Medusa & her horrible stone men, also a monstrous dragon. Color. 16mm. \$316

**ROME 1585** (1982) Debra Paget, Daniela Rocca, Antonio Ginepro, Fofco Luff. The leader of a gang of Spanish mercenaries falls for a beautiful princess. Thing get dirty, however, when an imprisoned leader is freed and comes calling. Paget, as usual, is absolutely stunning. Not bad. Color. From 16mm. \$317

**ALI BABA AND THE SEVEN SARACENS** (1962) Dan Harrison, Gordon Mitchell, Bella Cortez. A new king to the Golden Throne of the Maji is to be named. The leaders of eight tribes must duel to the death, the winner to be named king. Ali Baba, one of the leaders, returns from the sea only to find his life imperiled by an evil tribal leader, played to the hilt by Michel. Color. 16mm. \$318

**SON OF CLEOPATRA\*** (1965) Mark Damon, Solia Gabel, Alberto Lupo. A top sword and sandal movie! Damon is the son of Cleopatra, who escaped death from Octavian soldiers. As a man, he heads a desert tribe and is called "El Kabir." He leads Egyptians in revolt against their Roman oppressors. Color. 16mm. \$319



**BORN TO GAMBLE** (1935) Orsonio Stevens, H.B. Warner, Maxine Doyle, Eric Linden. The horrors of gambling—1930s style. Warner tells flashback stories of how gambling evils wrecked his family's life. One son bets his ship will arrive in port safely—it was the Lusitania! All kinds of gambling scene stories. 16mm. X102

**POOR WHITE TRASH\*** (1957) Peter Graves, Lia Milan, Douglas Fowley, Tim Carey. Graves is an architect who aids a bayou girl against her illiterate, white trash pappy. Initially a box office bomb, this was a huge hit upon re-release in the early '60s. Watch for the intense sequence where the young girl is chased through woods and has her clothes ripped off. 35mm. X163

**MYSTICAL PROPHECIES AND NOSTRADAMUS** (1961) Narrated by Basil Rathbone. Talk about a rarity. Here's a film we discovered several years ago at Headliner Productions' old offices. The film elements had been junked. Only a video master remained (we've got it). This never released film deals with the weird prophecies of Nostradamus and their effects on the world. X104

### SPAGHETTI & EURO WESTERNS

**STRANGER FROM PASO BRAVO** (1968) Anthony Steffen, Eduardo Fajardo, Grifia Rubini. A revenge driven stranger drifts into town. Although he wears no gun, he is seeking to kill the man who murdered his wife and daughter. Steffen is great, but Fajardo steals the show as the slimy villain. Color. 16mm. SW30

**TWICE A JUDAS** (1968) Klaus Kinski, Antonio Sabato, Cristina Galbo. An unscrupulous land baron (played effectively by Kinski) runs illegal migrant workers across the border to work lands stolen from poor farmers. Who is the mysterious stranger with no memory? A lively, well acted Euro western. Color. 16mm. SW31

**GUNS FOR DOLLARS** (1968) George Hilton, Agata Fioni, Charles Southwood. One of the better spaghetti westerns we've released. Hilton plays a gunman hired by a Mexican revolutionary to steal a case of jewels belonging to Maximilian. After the theft, the gems turn out to be counterfeit, and then all hell breaks loose. Great film! Much recommended. Color. from 16mm. SW32



**THREE BULLETS FOR A LONG GUN** (1970) Beau Brummel Keith Vanden Wat Patrick Myhardt This line Italian western was actually shot in Africa. A Yankee gunfighter and a Mexican bandit team up to search for Confederate treasure. Before you know it, they're trying to kill each other. Color 16mm SW33

**HAPPY FUNERAL AMIGOS, IT'S SARTANA** (1971) Gari Gari Antonio Vilar Daniela Giordano Hege Lina. In this interesting film, Sartana is after a corrupt banker in a small town who has caused all kinds of misery to the local townsfolk. This is a later Sartana film, but it captures much of the same flavor and atmosphere of the earlier series entries and is quite good. Color 16mm SW34

**GLAMOROUS NIGHTS  
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Doris  
**MERRICK**  
LARRY  
**QUILLAN**  
Cecilia  
**WORTH**  
and  
**KEWELL**

NOTE: All Action-Adventure titles are just \$12.95 (unless otherwise noted) plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**SENSATION HUNTERS** (1933) Aline Judge Preston Foster Marion Burns Kenneth McKenna A couple of nightclub singers head for the Orient. They get involved with two American guys after which the sparks really fly. Really atmospheric in a sleazy, cheap Oriental way with some fine old time musical numbers. Watch for the "suicide plane crash" scene. 16mm AA28

**SUICIDE SQUAD** (1935) Norman Foster Robt. Homans Joyce Compton Slick action picture about a squad of fearless firefighters who handle everything from ship explosions to bank robberies. Great action scenes for such a cheapie. 16mm AA29

**TUNDRA** (1936 aka The Mighty Thunders) Del Cambre William Merril McCormick Wally Howe Earl Dwyer A flying doctor's plane goes down over the Alaskan wastelands. He faces bears, avalanches, musk oxen, plague, and mountain lions in this lively action picture produced by E.R. Burroughs' company. 16mm AA30

**THE SEA BANDIT** (1936 aka I CONQUER THE SEA) Dennis Morgan, Staff Dume Douglas Walton. A seafaring yarn about a daring fisherman who loses his arm while at sea. He soon finds the courage and strength to come back as a one-armed sailor. The first 20 minutes are slow, then the action picks up. 16mm AA31

**QUICK AND THE DEAD** (1944) Larry Mann Sandy Donovan Victor French This exciting wartime adventure thriller is pretty violent for its time. A squad of GIs is sent in to destroy a Nazi ammunition dump. They are captured, but soon escape along with two Italian babes. Can they achieve their mission? 16mm AA32

## FANTASY

**ORIENTAL EVIL** (1951 aka INVISIBLE MR. UMWAL) Byron Michie Martha Hyer Tetsu Nakamura A fantasy thriller set in Tokyo. An American woman seeks the shy opium runner blamed for her brother's death. She's surrounded by a group of furtive characters and is led into a web of sinister oriental intrigue. Adding a nice twist is a weird ghostly being who oversees all involved, and is only visible to those marked for death! From 16mm F029

**PRINCESS CINDERELLA** (1955) Silvana Jachino Roberto Villa Paolo Stoppa Rosalba Tofano Mario Pisu Here's another variation on the legendary Cinderella story. This version has a witch and an ogre thrown in for good measure. Color 16mm F030

**JIMMY THE BOY WONDER** (1966) Nancy Jo Berg Dennis Jones David Bligh Directed by H.G. Lewis Attention Z-movie buffs. Jimmy the Boy Wonder may be the WORST film in the Smiler Cinema library. A stupid little kid wishes time would stop so he won't have to go to school. A weird devil character grants his wish. What follows is hilariously bad. A must! Color 16mm F031

**LEGEND OF EIGHT SAMURAI** (1984) Hiroko Yakeshimaru Henry Sanada Eight crystals from the body of a long dead princess identify the eight samurai who are destined to help a young princess overcome a family curse. They must face an evil goblin queen who bathes in blood! There are all kinds of cool monsters and apparitions. An epic fantasy for all sword and sorcery fans. Color 35mm F032

## JUNGLE THRILLS

**JUNGLE MAN** (1941 aka DRUMS OF AFRICA) Buster Crabbe Charlie Middleton Sheila Darcy Weldon Heyburn Vince Barnett Crabbe is a jungle doctor in an African village plagued by fever and headhunters. Heyburn is on a mission looking for the cure to the dead. He soon finds it, but is deserted by his crew. Barnett is nearly slain by a Python. Fine PRG jungle fun. 16mm J062

**JUNGLE PRINCESS** (1949) aka PRINCESS NG KAGUBATAN Lisa Galego Mario Esudero This Papia jungle film had scant release in the US. There's a lot of dialogue they didn't bother dubbing in English. There's a lot of action, scenery, wild, vine-swinging jungle babes, vicious pythons, snake mauls, blood ceremonies, crocodile attacks, native battles. 15mm J063

**ESCAPE FROM SAIGON** (1960) Joan Cheever Floor Razi Barbara Leaga Two gunrunners see a plane crash in the jungles of Vietnam. The lone survivor is a scientist who has perfected a new device that will detect and destroy all nuclear missiles. Will the gunrunners return him to safety or sell him to the highest bidder? Mercenaries, ancient temples, dangerous jungle trails and secret caves are all featured in this top thriller. From 16mm J064

**KING ELEPHANT** (1971) narrated by David Wayne This fine African documentary is filled with sequences about just about every African animal you can think about: lions, elephants, hyenas, chimps, giraffes, zebras, etc. they're all here in this beautifully shot epic documentary. A great family film. Color 35mm scope J065

## SPYS-ESPIONAGE-INTRIGUE

**GAMES DON'T CARE** (1955) Eddie Constantine Nadia Gray Dominique Wilma Lemmy Caution is back! He hooks up with a fellow agent at a night club to exchange info about a beautiful base the FBI has under observation. Later Eddie finds his fellow agent murdered and stuffed into a refrigerator! Who is the mysterious woman? Is she or her friends responsible for the murder? One of the better Caution series entries. Recommended. 16mm SP48

**OPERATION ABDUCTION** (1962) Frank Villard Darville Codel Delide What a cool movie with a touch of sci-fi to it! An inventor with a formula to fuel interplanetary spacecraft is abducted by enemy agents. The Secret Service is called in to recapture the scientist and break up the spy ring. Recommended. 16mm SP49

**NONE BUT THE LONELY SPY** (1964) Laurent Terzeff Hildegarde Neil Daniel Emittok Top secrets for sale! Somewhat different premise than most spy movies in that one one deals with a rogue spy who is successful at capturing top secret information and selling it to the highest bidder. Very well done. This movie really has that spy ring, 60s Euro-film-making feel to it. 16mm SP50

**THE RELUCTANT SPY** (1965) Jean Marais Genevieve Page Maurice Teyssie A suave playboy is pressed into the secret service by the government. He finds himself danger as he crosses the European continent, both as hunter and hunted. 16mm SP51

**COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY** (1967) George Adelson Horst Frank Pascale Audret A glamorous journalist writes a series of articles blasting drug traffickers. Later while sitting on a beach typing another article, she is kidnapped. She is tied to an explosive device that will be detonated if she doesn't email. A top Interpol agent is called in to find her and nab the thugs. Color 16mm SP52

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## MYSTERY-SUSPENSE-FILM NOIR

NOTE: All Mystery-Suspense titles are just \$12.95 (unless otherwise noted) plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**HOTEL CONTINENTAL** (1932) Peggy Shannon Theodore Von Eltz Alan Moubray A posh hotel is about to close its doors forever. A paroled convict comes back to the hotel to find stolen funds he hid there years earlier. He saves a woman from suicide, unaware that she has been hired by crooks to spirit the loot away from him. This early Tiffany tale is pretty good. 16mm M314

**LADY IN SCARLET** (1935) Chesterfield Reginald Denry Patricia Fair Dorothy Revier Claudia Dell James Bush An antique dealer is slain with a bloody rapier. There's also a caggy paring his hand into the hardwood floor. A high class detective and his wiseracting secretary stumble onto the case and find themselves surrounded by danger. A top poverty row mystery. 16mm M315

**EASY MONEY** (1938) immovable Onslow Stevens Kay Unkner Noel Madison Allen Vincent An assistant DA botches an insurance racket trial against his brother. He resigns, but goes to work for a private firm in order to bring his brother to justice. When the brother is murdered, he gets out after the killers. 16mm M317

**THE RIVERSIDE MURDER** (1935) Basil Sydney Judy Gunn Alastair Sim Ian Fleming A gentleman is shot dead in his study. The police come in to solve the crime. A young detective weaves his way through danger and an intricate set of clues to catch the killer. Watch for the scene where a murder is committed by shooting a gun through a mail slot in a door. The climax is terrific and similar to *Secret of the Blue Room*. Recommended. 16mm M316

**BEWARE OF LADIES** (1936) Donald Cook Judith Allen George Meeker Russell Hopton Cook plays a crusading lawyer who is running against a corrupt political boss for the DA job. He is shocked to find himself facing charges of adultery. Gangsters blackmail frame-ups, and murder are all part of this brisk Republic programmer. A great cast really helps it sail along. 16mm M318

**THREE BLONDES IN HIS LIFE...AND EACH  
WAS SOMEONE ELSE'S WIFE!**

**IT'S MURDER!**

**3 BLONDES IN HIS LIFE**

STARRING  
**JOCK MAHONEY & GRETA THYSSEN**

CASTING BY  
**TONY DEXTER ROSIE WHITE VALERIE PORTER ELANOR SPENCER**

**THE GREEN COCKATOO** (1937) John Mills Rene Ray Robert Newton Charles Oliver A slick British murder mystery about a country girl who helps out a professional dancer whose brother was murdered by a race gang. Intelligent intricate script is boosted by fine cast. Directed by William C. Menzies. 16mm M319

**MILLION DOLLAR RACKET** (1937) Herman Brink Joan Barclay Bryant Washburn Dave O'Brien An eccentric millionaire leases his mansion to a society-aspiring family. Unknown to them, he stays in the mansion disguised as a house worker. Things get exciting when a band of thieves case the joint for a jewel heist! A fun B crime-drama from Victory Pictures. From 16mm M320

**HYDE PARK CORNER** (1941) Gordon Barker Eric Portman Donald Wolf In the 1700s two gamblers die to the death. The dying gambler who feels he was swindled, puts a curse on the other family. Nearly 200 years later a descendant of the cursed family is arrested for murder in a gambling dispute that ends with the shooting of a descendant of the other family. The only witness that can clear him is found sitting dead behind a curtain, a suicide gun still in his hand. A cool British murder mystery. 16mm M321

**PAPER BULLETS** (1941) aka GANGS, INC. Jack LaRue Joan Woodbury Alan Ladd Linda Ware John Archer The drunken son of a millionaire hits and kills a priestman with his car. His female companion is persuaded to take the blame (how stupid can you get?). After she is released from jail she becomes a female gangster. A young officer (Ladd) is put on the case. 16mm M322

**THREE BLONDES IN HIS LIFE** (1960) Jock Mahoney Greta Thyssen Tony Dexter Valerie Porter Jesse White Tough insurance investigator Mahoney goes to LA to look into the murder of a fellow investigator. It's found that the murdered man knew three different women—all blondes and with each he had had a love affair. What is their connection to the crime? A slick, lively murder mystery with lots of gorgeous women. 16mm M323

**SEVEN TIMES SEVEN** (1966) Lionel Stander Terry-Thomas Enka Blum A great cops and robbers movie with a touch of wit to it. Seven convicts come up with a spectacular plan to break out of jail. They then plan to break into and rob the Royal Mint. After that they plan to break back into jail against. Color 16mm M324

**DIAGNOSIS MURDER** (1975) Christopher Lee Jon Finch Judy Geeson Jane Marrow An intriguing crime thriller with Lee as an evil psychiatrist who along with his secretary plots to murder his wife. Will they get away with it? This fine suspense film boasts plenty of thrills and is aided by a strong cast. Color 16mm M325

**EASY MONEY**

CASTING BY  
**TONY DEXTER ROSIE WHITE VALERIE PORTER ELANOR SPENCER**



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### SCARLET LETTERS

*Continued from page 4*

ern times, some actually discard Wells' social views. But it is important to understand things as they were in his time—the events that angered him—in order to understand the socialist ideas underlying his stories. Capitalism was failing—raping the land for everything it had while gaining wealth for the few. Exploitation was rampant before any regulation existed. Communism was an untried economic theory that sounded good in a time when class rifts left multitudes suffering in horrendous working conditions, many ill or dying. These factors—revealing so much about what people were willing to do to each other—stoked the author's cynicism and had profound effects on his conscience.

In closing, I want to tell you about a book I came across recently to stress how much I value your magazine. It was a coffee-table scrapbook called *War of the Worlds*, a tribute to Wells. Glossy and colorful, it looked nice at first glance. But 15 minutes of flipping through its pages revealed a sloppy structure. Most of it was composed of bits and pieces of information that were interesting (like when Wells met Orson Welles after the infamous radio broadcast), but could have been easily downloaded from the Net at home. Worst of all, it gives us a critical opinion of George Pal's version of Wells' book. The problem isn't the candor of the criticism, but that it's based on gross misinformation. The author "ob-

serves" that the martian war machines in the movie were "flying" machines rather than the tripods depicted in the novel, "Why," he asks, "didn't they just fly to earth rather than arrive in howled meteors?" Now, that's *really* bad. Gene Barry explained clearly in the early part of the movie that they weren't flying machines, but tripods carried by invisible legs composed of magnetic flux. The author lost me as a reader right away. It was as though he looked at part of the movie once and then walked away. When you assemble any publication, both the material and opinions put forth must be fully informed or you lose credibility and respect from the reader. I wanted to tell you about that book because I am impressed with the attention to detail your staff gives to your material. You show genuine affection for the subject matter as well as respect for intelligent readers.

Rob Van Gessel  
Santa Monica, CA

I read *Scarlet Street* lavishly from cover to cover as soon as it arrives in my mail, to the point that the other magazines are getting jealous of you.

Chris Housh  
Oakland, CA

Thanx, Chris! And if the other mags get too troublesome, you can always threaten them with the rack.

I like the new logo on the cover. You can't miss the magazine with "Scarlet" in such bold type.

I have some suggestions for a few possible features. How about an interview with David DeCoteau of Rapid Hearts Pictures? He's created in the last few years a new genre in the video horror business—gay (or a better title, homoerotic) horror. His films *ANCIENT EVIL*, *VOODOO ACADEMY*, and especially *THE BROTHERHOOD* are filled with sexy guys running around in their boxer briefs—just the opposite of current mainstream horror. He deserves some attention. Also, I know *Scarlet Street* mainly focuses on film actors, but how about doing something on some TV sci-fi stars who don't get much attention, like David Goddard on the series *BEASTMASTER*? An issue dedicated to the sword and sandal films or the various Tarzans (Miles O'Keeffe, Casper Van Dien) would be great, too. In fact, how about doing a special that comes out yearly or every six months, featuring more male celebrity beefcake? Straight guys have *Femme Fatale*, so how about creating a *Homme Fatale* or something like it for your loyal fans?

Mitch Evans  
Chicago, IL

We jockeyed for position to be the first to uncover *VOODOO ACADEMY*. Mitch, and you'll find something in this very issue. As for any special editions of *Scarlet Street*, well, our schedule's pretty full, I'm afraid. Unlike a certain gentleman named Wells, I haven't all the time in the world . . .

*Continued on page 14*



# Frankly Scarlet

In the month before New York City suddenly became a frightening place for people to live in or visit, *Scarlet Street* managing editor Tom Amorosi and I accepted an invitation to Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum on West 42nd Street for a press breakfast (no, that doesn't mean you consume members of the press) and a special announcement. The breakfast wasn't much to burp about, but the announcement itself was a real thrill for horror fans. On Halloween of this year, the museum will be unveiling astonishing new wax figures of Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi in their legendary roles of Frankenstein's Monster, Count Dracula, and Im-Ho-Tep, the Mummy. The figures weren't yet finished (their official debut was on October 10 at the Court of Miracles in the Universal Studios Theme Park, after which they made a brief sojourn to Florida Universal), but the ceremony included a video—photos at right—detailing the work that's gone into making these remarkable figures. (Madame's put the Hollywood Wax Museum to shame. In fact, the only comparable work I've seen is that by Cortlandt Hull in Connecticut.)

Sara Karloff, Bela Lugosi Jr., and Dwight Frye Jr. were at the breakfast, too, and we happily had a chance to play catch up. (It's been quite a while since we've seen Sara, but we'd spent some time with Bela and Dwight just a month or so earlier at the annual Monster Bash convention.) After the announcement, Tom and I toured the museum and, jaded though we are, found it a surprisingly enjoyable experience (This ain't just any ol' wax museum, gang.) Most of the figures were amazingly lifelike, and, except for Princess Di, they're not roped off from patrons.

And speaking of patrons, the place was packed. Trying to squeeze past a gaggle of gawkers, Tom said "Excuse me" to a rather large gent and waited patiently for him to move. He didn't. He was a wax figure of Al Roker. I thought that was a laugh riot till I politely stood by while a woman took a picture of some waxen replicas. Turned out the woman was a replica herself, of photographer Ann Leibowitz....

Madame Tussaud's is a fascinating place and we recommend it to all who either live in or visit New York—which brings me back to the beginning of this column. When terror struck on September 11, 2001, the city became, in the minds of many, a No Man's Land. Those who previously thought nothing of spending an evening in the Apple now hesitated and stayed home. That

didn't help much, of course—even our own homes seemed somehow alien; the world had changed, horribly so, and things that were vital on September 10 had lost meaning by the night of the following day.

On the message boards on the *Scarlet Street* Website, I wrote: "I love New York City, and I've always said I could never live further away from it than I do right now. (It's a 20-minute drive to the George Washington Bridge.) I never will live further away from it if I can help it, but right now—right this very minute, for a few minutes, anyway—I'd like to be at the farthest possible point in this country from where I sit. It's all too close, and I can't even imagine how people right in Manhattan—or in Washington D.C.—are managing to cope."

In those early hours of the tragedy, there was, of course, concern for friends and loved ones. *Scarlet Street* associate editor Ken Hanke and I asked our on-liners to let us know they were safe. The phone rang regularly in the office, with calls from Cortlandt Hull in Connecticut and Kasey (BEWITCHED) Rogers and her pal and coauthor, Mark Wood, in Hollywood. Carol Ann Susi (of KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER fame) e-mailed as did dozens of others. I put in a call to make sure that *Scarlet* Scribe Kevin Shinnick was safe. Normally Kevin wouldn't have been in the city but on September 11 he was planning to attend—on behalf of *Scarlet Street*—a special screening of *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* at the Waverly Theatre (where director John Landis and stars David Naughton and Griffin Dunne were scheduled to speak), followed by a reception at the Slaughtered Lamb restaurant. Now, both the Waverly and the Slaughtered Lamb are nowhere near the Twin Towers—even if Kevin had been at either place, he was in no danger—but such was the feeling of helplessness that I was compelled to check up on him.

Good thing, too. As Kevin later told me, he had a business meeting scheduled that morning on the 65th floor of one of the Towers, at 8:30. It conflicted with another meeting and was rescheduled to 10:30. There were many such stories of narrow escapes.

By the next day, I'd begun to get angry—not only over what had happened, but at the endless admonishments that our lives were irrevocably altered, that nothing would ever be the same. I wrote, again on our message boards: "We have been told since yesterday morning that life as we knew it is forever changed, and in some respects that's certainly true. But if we believe that to the point of abandoning all that is precious to us, then we will have given up on life entirely. Let's hold on to the joys in our lives, as dearly as we hold on to those we love."

There's a balance to be achieved here. On the one hand, no one wants to put what's happened so far out of mind as to say, "It's over, it's done with, forget it,



time to move on." On the other hand, it's only human—and healthy—to want to step back from what's happened and indulge in whatever is our personal definition of "life's little pleasures." (I know, I know—for some of us, that's Angelo Rossitto.)

Putting together an issue of *Scarlet Street* is, for all the strife and stress and occasional frustrations, one of my pleasures and a source of pride and satisfaction. It's escapism about escapism, and the work on this issue served as a most welcome respite from world events. I hope reading it serves the same function for you, our fine and faithful *Scarlet Streeters*....

*Richard Valley*

P.S. Oh, by the way—color!



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		<b>TITLES</b>

## SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 12

Your cover on *Scarlet Street* #42 featuring Ursula Andress was extremely eye-catching. Edifying in a more (cough) intellectual way were the superb articles, including the wittily recounted Road Pictures article by Ken Hanke. Your publication continues to be among the most readable and entertaining available.

Barry Rivadue  
New York, NY

After I read and enjoyed Leilia Loban and Richard Valley's amazing Part Two of *THE PICTURES OF DORIAN GRAY* (*Scarlet Street* #42), I couldn't help but think that Albert Lewin's 1945 version of Oscar Wilde's 1891 classic is one of the most faithful and meticulous film adaptations of a famous and revered book in the history of the cinema. Even the introduction of two characters who do not appear in the book—Basil Hallward's niece and her devoted suitor—does not mar the adaptation and certainly adds dramatic impetus to Dorian Gray's demise. Of course, the homoerotic context of the original is missing—Wilde himself toned it down considerably from its initial presentation in an American publication, *Lippincott's Magazine*, to its final appearance in book form by Ward, Lock & Company—but the still-mesmerizing homoeroticism of the "sanitized" book version could not have found its way into a quality MGM production of the early forties with an established star such as George Sanders.

Both Wilde's initial magazine version and the later book version were greeted with a great deal of scandal, but MGM's expensive production was an immediate success at the box office, went on to become a genuine film classic, and, just recently, found its way into the American Film Institute's list of The 100 Greatest Thrillers.

Leilia Loban and Richard Valley do a great job of dissecting the visual density and subtlety of the picture—which, of course, was absolutely necessary, because nothing of perhaps "an offensive nature" could be said outright. Nowhere in the film is this covert approach more impressive than in the reunion scene between Dorian Gray and Alan Campbell. In the book's highly-intriguing Chapter 14, Wilde is very subtle in dramatizing this enforced get-together between "great friends" five years later, but it is clearly a case of a love affair that had gone horribly wrong and turned Alan into a willing recluse. It's also quite evident that Dorian will expose Alan as a "sodomite" to the authorities if he does not use his scientific expertise to dispose of Basil's body. In the film, as soon as Alan enters Dorian's study, he cannot bring himself to make eye contact with Dorian. This averted glance speaks volumes about their past relationship, and his subsequent body language substantiates his resolve not to get involved with Dorian again. But, in the end, he does break down, he does collapse into a chair, he does actually reach out a hand—and, fi-

nally, agreeing to dispose of Basil's body, he uses that hand to crumple the incriminating letter with which Dorian has been threatening him. Nowhere in the book or the film is Dorian more cruel—he actually seals the lid on his former lover's own coffin!

In James Agee's famously negative review of the film in *The Nation*, he writes, "I realize that Hurd Hatfield represents a most unusually hard try at good casting, and once cast he certainly tries as hard as the wrong man can, but it is sad, like watching an understudy fall short with the chance of a lifetime." Agee couldn't have been more wrong. In Albert Lewin's hands, Hatfield is deliberately directed to be a chilling enigma and, as the story progresses, an unfeeling monster. With those stunning eyes and voluptuous lips, Hatfield manages to be both stillborn and fascinating. It is a highly memorable performance, one of the great collaborations between a director and his star. Hurd Hatfield may have had mixed feelings about the effects of *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* on his film career, but his performance took him into the ranks of screen immortality, where he most certainly belongs.

Raymond Banacki  
Brooklyn, NY

*Scarlet Street* #42 was yet another cover-to-cover class act! I love theme issues, and the continuation of *THE PICTURES OF DORIAN GRAY*, along with Part Two of the *SHE* saga seem to simply go together



As with the previous issue's interviews with Hurd Hatfield and Helmut Berger, the current issue's conversations with Shane Briant, Dennis Wayne, and Ursula Andress further enhance the enjoyment of the of the core articles. Those articles themselves, by the way, are engagingly presented and quite well researched. Richard Valley and Lela Loban should feel proud of their work, which should stand for some time as key references of these subjects.

Part of the beauty of *Scarlet Street* is the presentation of articles big and small, many of which can be enjoyed individually or collectively, depending on how much you want to read on a particular subject, such as Dorian Gray. Of course, there seems nearly no end to so many other choice features, from DVD and book reviews by people who know what they're talking about, to The News Hound's previews of coming attractions. The letters themselves, by Richard Gordon and others, entertainingly reflect an ongoing appreciation of the work you're doing, work that is clearly your pleasure, as well.

*Scarlet Street's* readers, while perhaps first and foremost fans of fantastic cinema, also tend to appreciate a variety of film genres, and the magazine's new Side Streets department provides an opportunity to expand beyond the arena of mystery and horror. Ken Hanke kicked things off well with his piece on the Road Pictures, so much so that I think I'll reacquaint myself with Bing, Bob, and Dotie

in the near future. Thanks, too, for the update on the restoration of *NIGHT OF DARK SHADOWS* and for more information on the life and times of David Peel, which, in part, turned out to be another great tie-in to the life and times of Dorian Gray! I know Richard Valley won't rest until the story of Citizen Peel has been told

Joe Winters  
Richmond, Indiana

How about some articles on the great British TV series, such as *DOCTOR WHO* and *BLAKE'S 7*? Also *SPACE 1999*, *THE SAINT* (both Roger Moore and Ian Ogilvy) and more on *THE AVENGERS*, especially the lovely Linda Thorson?

Alexander M Foundoukis  
Caldwell, NJ

We're fans of the underappreciated Linda Thorson, too, so count on it! *Scarlet Street* coverage of *THE SAINT* is definitely in the works too, including an exclusive interview with Ian Ogilvy, covering both Sainthood and his work with Vincent Price and Boris Karloff.

David Peel, billed seventh in *BRIDES OF DRACULA*, still managed to grab center stage as one of the best actors to portray the vampire fiend, and far better than Christopher Lee's many portrayals of Dracula through the years.

I thought David Peel added a charming, sinister quality to his Dracula that Christopher Lee never managed to convey. Peel's Dracula had stylish elegance, yet was tinged with a terrifying menace that

fairly grabbed your attention. This actor really had it together as a study in evil wrapped in elegant charm.

I think it quite unfortunate David Peel never donned the Count's cloak after that, but then again his one performance was memorable enough in itself to stand the test of time. Bless his memory and I will never forget his Dracula. Fangs for the memories!

Bill Wilkerson  
Columbia, SC

Actually, Bill, what you'll never forget is David Peel as Baron Meinster, since he wasn't playing Count Dracula at all. That said, you'll find no greater Peel enthusiastic than *Scarlet Street's* own publisher—though I must say state unequivocally that I think very highly of Christopher Lee's performance as Drac and I'd say that even if the Last of the Great Horror Star's wasn't scheduled to materialize next issue!

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Mixed Doubles

# Universal Horrors

on DVD

by Harry H. Long

The release of the third batch of Universal horror DVDs is a mixed blessing, particularly for hardcore fans. One the one hand, it's terrific to have a full dozen titles appear rather than a measly five per year and, given their presentation as Double Features, at about half the price. However, the decision to go almost "no frills" with all titles is a real disappointment compared to the lavish presentation afforded earlier releases, which came with trailers, art galleries, excellent documentaries by horror historian David J. Skal, and some of the best audio commentaries in the business. The current crop offers only trailers, plus onscreen production notes and biographies which, while informative, are not precisely extensive.

If this spare approach is a business decision, it's really a very odd one; in the current market, many DVD s are so loaded with extras that the film

itself seems an afterthought. (The recent DVD of 1977's *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND* requires two discs—and still carries a lower price tag than the Universals.) The real pity is that at least two of the current titles—*WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (1935) and *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* (1936)—clearly deserve the full treatment, while several others—*SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1939), *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1942), *SON OF DRACULA* (1943)—are arguably worthy of it. That they don't receive deluxe consideration is a shame, just as it's discouraging to realize that other titles still in the library—*THE BLACK CAT* (1934) for instance—will have less DVD extras than, say, *FREDDY GOT FINGERED* (2000). *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* (1943) and *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1944) are more interesting for their production histories than as films, yet even those might warrant either a commentary or a documentary, if not both. Only the Kharis the Mummy series—a fun, but hardly noteworthy, quartet of time-wasters—gets suitable treatment. Which brings us to *SHE-WOLF OF LONDON* (1946). Just who in blue blazes had this puppy on a list of priorities for DVD treatment?

Since the discs lack the extras which made the first releases must-haves, these releases must rise or fall on the quality of their transfers. Fortunately, these are mostly very good, although some caveats must be noted for the purists in our midst. (I know you're out there; I can hear you harumphing.) *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* has a pulsing quality to the picture in the first portion—like nothing so much as a flickering projector bulb about to fail—although





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**PAGE 16 TOP:** Horror great Boris Karloff reprised his most famous characterization in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1939). **PAGE 16 BOTTOM:** A lobby card from *SON OF DRACULA* (1943), which starred Lon Chaney Jr. as a chip off the original count's old coffin. **LEFT:** The majority of the new Universal DVDs star Chaney Jr., the studio's top horror star of the forties. He's pictured here as the Frankenstein Monster (with Bela Lugosi as Ygor and Janet Ann Galloway as a bundle) in *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1942), as Kharis (with Turhan Bey as high priest Mehemet Bey and Elyse Knox as Isobel Evans) in *THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1942), and—his signature character—as The Wolf Man (with Elena Verdugo as Ilonka) in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1944).

comparison revealed this is less noticeable on some equipment than on others. (My computer's DVD-ROM made this far more obvious than my DVD play/TV hookup.) *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* has that damn bobble during the credits, which seems to have been there since the beginning of time, and a really nasty splice near the end. There is a brief but very obvious hiss on the soundtrack of *SON OF DRACULA*, during the scene in which Frank Stanley (Robert Paige) confesses murder to Dr. Brewster (Frank Craven). The closeups of the Solvani the Great poster in *THE MUMMY'S HAND* (1940) are vignettized with such a wide border that it actually becomes harder to read, and the abrupt shift in image size is disconcerting—it looks like a regression to silent film technique. The credits for *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* are taken from an alternate (or altered?) version, placing Lambert Hillyer's card later in the sequence. (These aren't entirely restoration problems, per se, but they are baffling.)

Could these problems have been corrected? I'm no expert on the technology, but my guess is that they could—and possibly quite easily. The bigger question, though, is whether they should, since the film restoration debate, like the art preservation argument, divides between the opinions of those who believe films should simply be preserved on more stable media and those who maintain that current technology should be used to restore them to as close an approximation as possible of their original pristine state. Since Universal has already taken advantage of technology to sharpen the image and present an opulent grayscale—with rich, inky shadows—the question is moot. Having taken the first steps, they should have made the full journey. (For my part, only the splice at the end of *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* set my teeth on edge; the others are merely annoying.)

Yet even those few steps strike at the heart of the debate, because they come with trade-offs and controversy. Some feel that the new prints are too dark—although, since many horror fans are used to the faded prints circulated to television for ages, that is possibly a subjective opinion. A comparison to VHS versions shows that, while shadow areas are indeed much blacker, they conceal few details; in fact, it is now possible to appreciate properly the splendid interplay of light and dark in the photography. The town council meeting at the opening of *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* is a perfect example of this—it looks like a Rembrandt composition—although the chief beneficiary among the titles is *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, which for the first time looks like a real movie rather than a crummy kinescope. It's finally possible to appreciate this film's impressive photography and design in addition to its intelligent script. Even as throwaway a moment as the Glendon werewolf (Henry Hull) throwing open a hexagonal window has a visceral snap it's never possessed before.

The improved image quality truly grabs the attention. I'd expected simply to sample these discs for review; I know the films backward and forward already. Instead, I was glued to the tube. (Okay, I fast-forwarded through the endless stock footage recap of 1942's *THE MUMMY'S*



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TOMB and most of SHE-WOLF OF LONDON.) I was seized by the feeling of truly seeing for the first time films that I'd watched countless times before. I was struck by the realization that, for surrealism of imagery and a visual poetry of juxtaposed beauty and the grotesque, these films may be unrivaled by the product of any other studio. These moments range from touches that are merely unusual—the gaggle of geese running to Ygor (Bela Lugosi) and the Monster (Lon Chaney Jr.) in *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN*—to the freakish detail of nightmares—the Monster, in the same film, dangling a child's clown-faced ball, which bounces jauntily. Even the lesser films possess such moments. The Kharis quartet, as noted, is hardly among Universal's crown jewels of the forties, but the second and third installments bring the mummy stateside and result in images that are disturbing for juxtaposing him with the ordinary—for example, when he crashes through a split-rail fence, or stalks the serenely ravishing night-scapes. The brief shot of Kharis carting Isobel Evans (Elyse Knox) across a bridge in *THE MUMMY'S TOMB*, with weeping willows dangling over a sparkling stream in the background, is more haunting and stunningly beautiful than entire movies from other studios. Some of this is attributable to George Robinson, who photographed most of these titles, and some to the fortunate asset of the studio's extensive back lot and some impressive standing sets. (Some of it, too, may have been simply dumb luck.) Of Universal's two chief rivals at this kind of entertainment, Hammer lacked the back lot and RKO's Val Lewton may have been trying too deliberately for poetry. It was Jean Cocteau who noted that poetry cannot be achieved except by accident, and even he might have envied shots of a living mummy carrying women clad in diaphanous night-gowns through serenely tranquil moonlit vistas.

Not that added sharpness doesn't also have its drawbacks. The train roaring through the countryside at the

opening of *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* is more clearly a model than ever before. Seams in the set walls are painfully obvious, as are deficiencies in the Frankenstein Monster's headpiece in all the post-Whale titles—a mark of their lower budgets or a tribute to Whale's persnickiness? The two men tussling in the laboratory in *WEREWOLF* are clearly not Warner Oland and Henry Hull. Increased grain is also in evidence, particularly in the much-duplicated Universal logo, the cross-fades in *WEREWOLF*, and in some closeups of the leading ladies in the Kharis films. (The latter is the result, perhaps, of oversharpening an image originally made through gauze filters.) Again, your reaction will depend on your tolerance for such things; in films whose age is positively geriatric, a few wrinkles and liver spots ought to be expected.

Perversely, what is most bothersome is that, having chosen a film from the main menu, the only way to view the other feature is to turn off the DVD player and restart it. There is simply no other way to reaccess the main menu. A small thing, perhaps, but exceedingly aggravating.

The bottom line is that, unless you're a DVD fanatic, most of these titles offer little improvement over their VHS counterparts beyond additional sharpness, denser blacks, and requiring less storage space. The only must-have is *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, which—freed from its dreary, gray, fogbound twilight—can rightly be assessed as one of Universal's top titles from the first wave of horror, rather than an interesting also-ran.

**SON OF FRANKENSTEIN/THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN  
 DRACULA'S DAUGHTER/SON OF DRACULA  
 WEREWOLF OF LONDON/SHE-WOLF OF LONDON  
 THE MUMMY'S HAND/THE MUMMY'S TOMB  
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# the NEWS HOUND

The Hound hopes your holiday season is a peaceful one... but he'll now rudely interrupt that peace with juicy pieces of information about a thrilling, chilling entertainment slate for late 2001 and beyond...

## Now Slaying

Currently in theaters: **FROM HELL** (20th Century Fox), an atmospheric rendition of the Jack the Ripper murders from directors Allen and Albert Hughes. Johnny Depp stars as Inspector Frederick Abberline, the brilliant and troubled chief investigator of the Ripper murders. Heather Graham plays doomed street-walker Mary Kelly, and Ian Holm appears as Sir William Gull, physician to royal Ripper suspect Prince Albert Victor. The script, cowritten by Terry Hayes (1981's **MAD MAX 2: THE ROAD WARRIOR**), is based on Alan Moore's acclaimed comic book series.

Opening in theaters in December is director Peter Jackson's **LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING** (New Line Cinema), starring Elijah Wood, Sir Ian McKellen, Liv Tyler, Brad Dourif, John Rhys-Davies, and Christopher Lee. This first feature in the planned trilogy is sure to have fantasy fans kvelling over its ultralavish, ultra-faithful presentation of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic novel. Also debuting in December is **JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS** (Paramount/Nickelodeon Movies), a computer-animated sci-fi comedy by talented director John A. Davis (whose hilarious 1997 ABC-TV special **SANTA VS. THE SNOWMAN** is being reformatted for IMAX theaters for the 2002 holiday season). Patrick Stewart and Martin Short lend their vocal talents to the flick.

The acclaimed French action/horror/fantasy **BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF** (Universal Focus) opens in a limited release in January, starring Samuel Le Bihan, Monica Bellucci, and Marc Dacascos (late of TV's syndicated **THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS**). January also brings the supernatural drama **DRAGONFLY** (Universal), starring Kevin Costner as a doctor who believes his dead wife is sending him ghostly messages via the near-death experiences of his patients. (One possible message: "Please don't direct any more movies running over three hours long.")

Also scheduled for limited release in January is **MARK OF THE ASTRO-ZOMBIES**, writer/director Ted V. Mikels' follow-up to his 1969 low-low-budgeter (you guessed it) **THE ASTRO ZOMBIES**. It stars modern horror queen Brinke Stevens alongside veteran Mikels cast mem-

bers Ron Jason, Liz Renay, and Tara Satana. Also starring John Carradine! (Well, part of him, anyway...)

Action specialist John McTiernan (of the **DIE HARD** movies) directs MGM's remake of their violent 1975 sci-fi drama **ROLLERBALL**, opening in February. It stars Chris Klein of the **AMERICAN PIE** movies, along with Jean Reno, LL Cool J, and Rebecca Romijn-Stamos. Disney's near-blasphemous sequel **PETER PAN II: RETURN TO NEVERLAND** also comes to theaters in February, with Peter back in Merrie Olde England, rescuing the

Will Patton. **NO SUCH THING** (United Artists) is idiosyncratic director Hal Hartley's beauty and beast fantasy starring Sarah Polley, Robert John Burke, Helen Mirren, and Julie Christie. Also scheduled for February is the Anne Rice adaptation **THE QUEEN OF THE DAMNED** (Warner Bros.), starring the late actress-singer Aaliyah in the title role.

Release dates for all of the above are, of course, tentative, so check your local listings for confirmation.

## Deja Views

The long-threatened third sequel to **THE EXORCIST** is finally materializing. Directorial duties for the film are in the possession of John Frankenheimer, helmer of the classic thriller **THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE** (1962) and the recent actioner **REINDEER GAMES** (2000). Screenwriter/novelist Caleb Carr (*The Alienist*) authored the final-draft script for the movie, which is a flashback to the first demonic wrestling match of exorcist extraordinaire Father Merrin. The role of Merrin, portrayed by Max Von Sydow in the first two films, has reportedly been inherited by 29-year-old Kerr Smith, known to TV viewers as the gay heartthrob Jack McPhee on **DAWSON'S CREEK**. Production on the so-far-untitled **EXORCIST** prequel is expected to start in the spring, followed by a 2003 release by Warner Bros.

Oh, behave! Filming has already begun on Mike Myers' third swinging spy spoof, **AUSTIN POWERS: GOLDMEMBER**. Myers plays four roles in the new entry, including the rigid new villain of the title. Director Jay Roach and New Line Cinema are aiming for a summer 2002 release.

Concerning a slightly more serious secret agent, Pierce Brosnan returns as James Bond in the 20th film in the series, which goes into production early next year. United Artists hasn't settled on a title yet, but at least they've decided on 007's mode of transportation: an Aston Martin. It's the famous brand driven previously by four Bonds: Sean Connery (1964's **GOLDFINGER**, 1965's **THUNDERBALL**), George Lazenby (1969's **ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE**), Timothy Dalton (1987's **THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS**), and Brosnan himself, in his debut turn **GOLDENEYE**.

The **HIGHLANDER** franchise seems to be as immortal as its protagonists. The screenplay for **HIGHLANDER 5: THE SOURCE** is now being concocted, and series regulars Adrian Paul, Elizabeth Gracen, Peter Wingfield, and Jim Byrnes



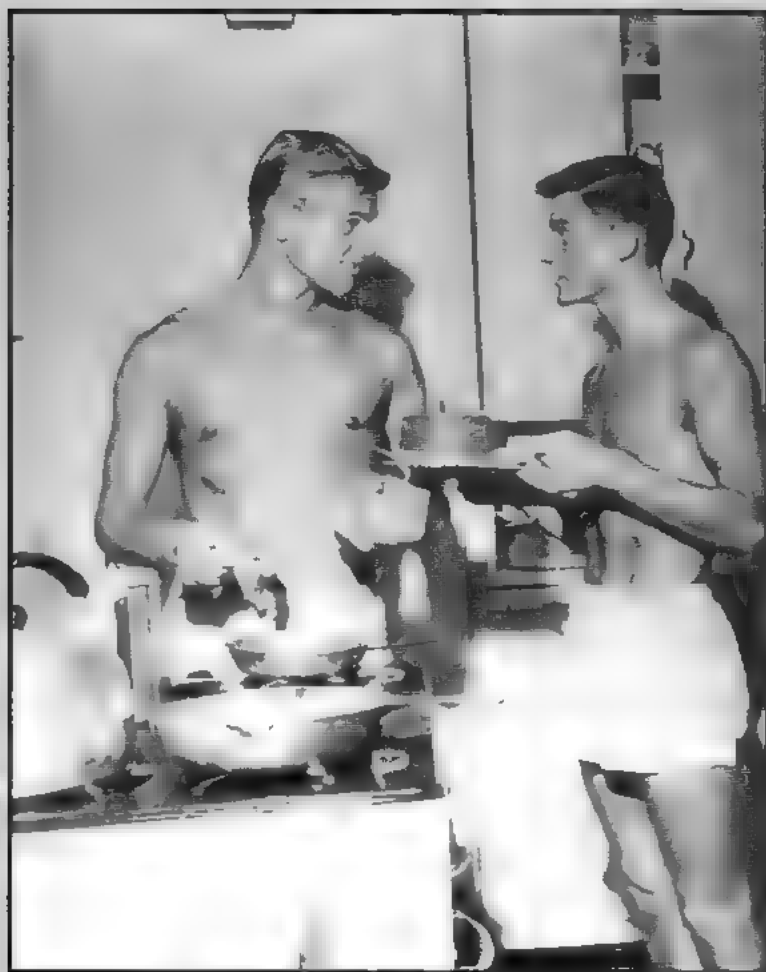
Maury Chaykin will be back solving crime in the famous oversized chair when **NERO WOLFE** returns to A&E early next year.

daughter of the now-grown-up Wendy from Captain Hook, amid the WWII blitz. Another February offering is **THE TIME MACHINE** (DreamWorks/Warner Bros.), a new rendering of H.G. Wells' famous fantasy tale directed by his own great-grandson, Simon Wells. It stars Australian actor Guy Pearce (so good in 2000's **MENTO**, so glamorous in 1994's **THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA: QUEEN OF THE DESERT**), Tony-winner Philip Bosco, and Oscar winner Jeremy Irons.

There's more in store in February. **THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES** (Screen Gems) is an X-FILES-flavored thriller starring Richard Gere as a reporter who investigates sightings of gerbils—no, make that winged alien creatures—in West Virginia. The solid supporting cast includes Alan Bates, Laura (TALES OF THE CITY) Linney, Debra Messing, and

Continued on page 22





TAB: Say, Roddy, have you seen the swell Discussion Boards over on the Scarlet Website? You can sign on and talk about classic Universal Horrors, Hammer Films, Sherlock Holmes, Charlie Chan, Alfred Hitchcock, Tarzan of the Apes, The Thin Man, Jack the Ripper, and just about anything else that comes to mind! Why, heck, you can even talk about sexual subtexts in our old pictures . . .

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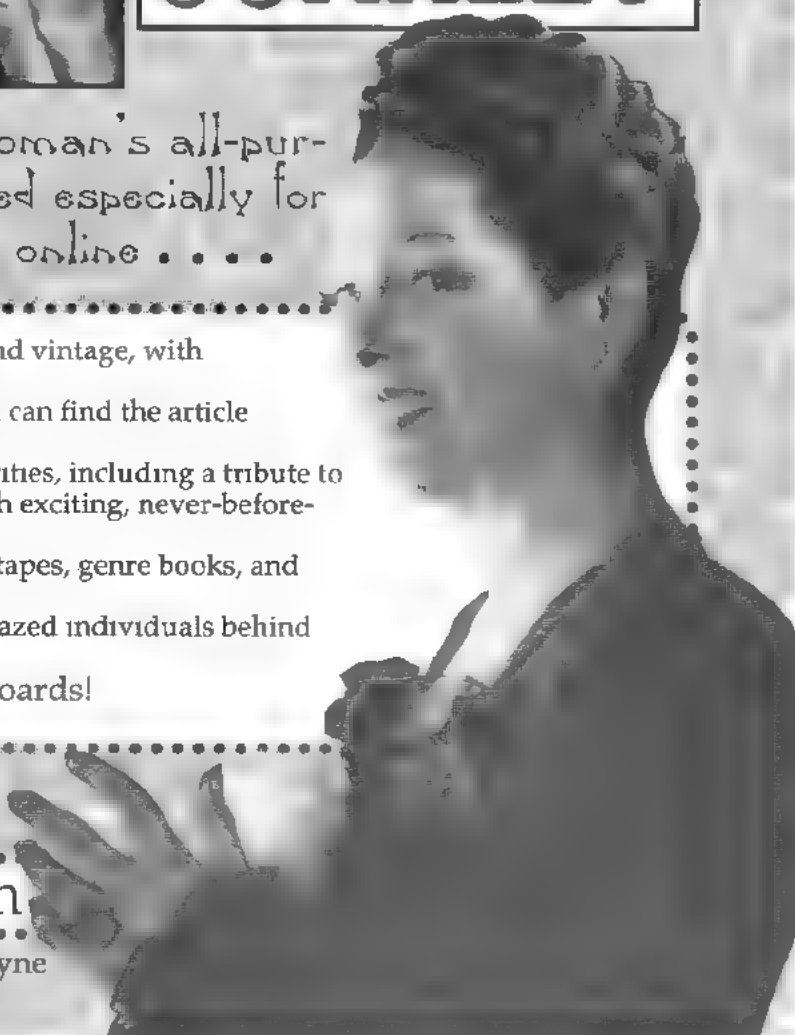
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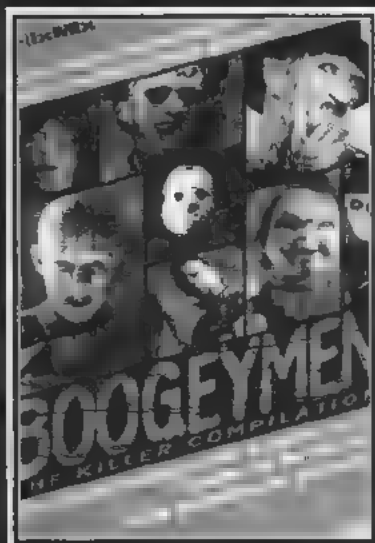




# It's the Boogeymen!

Scarlet Street's usual route is toward the older, classic horrors of the thirties, forties, fifties, and sixties, but there's no denying that there's a rabid fan base out there for the slice-and-dice fiends that came along in the blood-crazy seventies and eighties.

Now there's a new DVD available that brings together all these latter-day dastards and fiends. It's called **BOOGEYMEN**, it's available now from Flix Mix, and it features an all-scar lineup of real fun guys, including Freddy Kreuger, Pinhead, Michael Myers, Wishmaster, Leatherface, Ghostface, Chucky, Blade, The Dentist (now, that's scary!), Jason Voorhees, Candyman (I always thought



that was Sammy Davis Jr.), Simon, Leprechaun, The Fisherman, Camilla, The Tall Man, and Norman Bates. (At last, a name I know!)

The films include Alfred Hitchcock's **PSYCHO** (1960), **HALLOWEEN** (1978), **PHANTASM** (1979), **A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET** (1984), **HELLRAISER** (1987), **CANDYMAN** (1992), **SCREAM** (1996), and **I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER** (1997, and I sure as hell hope not!).

Actually, there are some good movies here—17 in all—and some fine spooky scenes, and all with an audio commentary by Robert Englund. It runs over three hours, and it's all yours for a reasonable \$19.98

—Drew Sullivan

## NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 20

have signed on—and so has Christopher Lambert, even though his Connor MacLeod character pretty definitely snuffed it in the fourth movie. Timothy Dalton and Roger Daltrey may also appear.

Producers Glen Morgan and James Wong—the talented team behind some of **THE X-FILES**' best shows, as well as the current Jet Li sci-fi action flick **THE ONE**—have two big-screen remakes on their slate: a new version of the 1971 rat tale **WILLARD** for New Line Cinema, and a redo for Dimension of the memorable 1973 movie-of-the-week **DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK** (yes, the one with those creepy little trolls terrorizing Kim Darby).

### Novel Ideas

Alfred Hitchcock's abandoned project for Audrey Hepburn—an adaptation of Henry Cecil's 1952 thriller *No Bail For the Judge*—is resurfacing as a vehicle for Julia Roberts. The original script by Samuel Taylor, who also adapted Hitchcock's **VERTIGO** (1958) and **TOPAZ** (1969), is being updated for the production, which is in development at Paramount through Maverick Pictures and Roberts' own production company.

Playwright John Guare (1993's **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION**) and director Philip Kaufman (2000's **QUILLS**) are teaming on a new version of **SUSPICION** for Dimension Films. Based on the 1932 novel *Before the Fact* by Francis Iles (an alias of mystery author Anthony Berkeley Cox, who also wrote 1931's *Malice Aforethought*), it's the tale of a young bride who fears hubby is plotting her murder. It was first filmed by Alfred Hitchcock in 1941, starring Cary Grant and Best Actress Oscar-winner Joan Fontaine.

Karen Essex has been contracted by Warner Bros. to adapt her debut novel *Kleopatra* (2001) and its upcoming sequel *Pharaoh* for the screen. For her novels, Essex has researched and documented the often-fabricated life of the Egyptian queen and her encounters with Marc Antony, Julius Caesar, and other ancient notables. Essex is also at work on a screen adaptation of Anne Rice's *The Mummy*, or *Ramses the Damned* (1989) for Fox and producer James Cameron.

*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2000), the second novel in J.K. Rowling's zillion-selling series, is already going before the cameras this fall—all the better to have another lucrative Potter movie in theaters by the end of 2002. Also, Amblin Productions wants its rapidly maturing young actors to look relatively the same in the next installment.

While we're still sniffing out the print media, The Hound wants to give four wags to Bill Edwards' digest-sized fanzine *Drac's Creepy Connection*. Good reading, good fun, and you'll find more info at [www.dracscreepyconnection.com](http://www.dracscreepyconnection.com)...

### TV Terrors

**TARZAN FINDS A CAB!** The WB network is looking to give the Jungle King their

trademark TV teen treatment, and toss him into another New York Adventure. Screenwriters Michael Colleary and Mike Werb (2001's **TOMB RAIDER**) are scripting the pilot episode for the proposed series, which features a 17-year-old Tarzan of the Apple—the Apple being, of course, Manhattan, where (as we all know) the loincloth is common nightlife attire.

Also in development at the WB: a return to the Land of Oz in a new fantasy series from writer/producer David Hayter, screenwriter of the **X-MEN** feature and its upcoming sequel. Tentatively titled **TALES OF OZ**, it features a 20-something female protagonist caught in a darker, more modern Oz. (Dorothy and Toto are long gone from this Emerald City.) Watch for it sometime in 2002.

Fans of the wonderful **NERO WOLFE** series on the Arts & Entertainment cable channel will be happy to learn that all-new episodes are in the wings. A&E will present a new set of Rex Stout adaptations, starring Timothy Hutton as Archie Goodwin and Maury Chaykin as Wolfe, within the first few months of the new year. Satisfactory!

A new miniseries adaptation of ever-busy Stephen King's *Salem's Lot* (1976) is in development for Turner Network Television. The Mark Wolper production is being scripted by Peter Filardi, writer of the 1996 occult teen hit **THE CRAFT** (The original **SALEM'S LOT** miniseries, directed in 1979 by Tobe Hooper for CBS, can currently be seen on DVD.)

Feature director Jan de Bont (1996's **TWISTER**) is set to produce a four-hour sci-fi miniseries for the FX cable channel entitled **EATER**. It's based on the 2000 novel by astronomer/physicist Gregory Benford about a black hole that threatens to swallow the Earth.

A remake of the Nazi sci-fi thriller **THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL** is in development at TNT. Heywood Gould, who adapted Ira Levin's 1978 novel for the 1978 original, is once again scripting. Writer/director Gould's recent works include last year's effective neo-noir cable feature **DOUBLE BANG**.

### The Wicked Stage

Broadway's original **PHANTOM** Michael Crawford makes a monstrous return to the Great White Way as the living-dead lead in **DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES**, director Roman Polanski's musical version of his 1967 movie **THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS**. The Jim Steinman/Michael Kunze show is transferring to Broadway in an English-language translation, following successful productions in its original German in Vienna and Stuttgart. Crawford is reportedly contracted to appear in the musical for 12 months, beginning with its scheduled April 2002 premiere.

The producers of **FRANKENSTEIN THE MUSICAL** at New Jersey-based Curio Productions are showcasing their new creation in a unique manner. Show producer Jeff Jackson is directing a digital video production of the entire piece as a promotional presentation for future stagings. Appearing in this special video



version are current and former Broadway cast members of *THE FANTASTICKS*, *LES MISERABLES*, and *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*. The book and lyrics for this unusually faithful Mary Shelley adaptation were written by Gary P. Cohen in collaboration with Jackson, music is by Mark Baron. Visit [www.frankensteinthemusical.com](http://www.frankensteinthemusical.com) for further details

#### The Home Video Vault

Currently available on DVD special editions of *LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER* (Paramount, \$29.99), *THE TERMINATOR* (MGM, \$26.98), *TOTAL RECALL* (Artisan, \$26.98), *BASIC INSTINCT* (Artisan, \$26.98 each for the R-rated or unrated version), *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* (Universal, \$26.98), *SHREK* (DreamWorks \$26.99), Walt Disney's *DUMBO* (\$29.99), the restored director's cut of *STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE* (Paramount, \$29.99), and double-disc Criterion editions of the Hitchcock classics *NOTORIOUS* and *REBECCA* (\$39.95 each) (Criterion promises that a special edition of *SPELLBOUND*—tinted gun-shot included—is coming soon.)

Also in stores: multidisc limited editions from Anchor Bay of Dario Argento's *OPERA* (\$34.98) and *SUSPIRIA* (\$44.98); and the DVD debuts of Hammer's fine 1959 version of *THE MUMMY* (Warner Bros., \$19.98); Agatha Christie's *AND THEN THERE WERE NONE* (Image, \$24.99), *CIRCUS OF HORRORS*, *DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE*, *LUST FOR A VAMPIRE*, *DR. WHO AND THE DALEKS*, *DALEKS INVASION EARTH 2150 A.D.*, and *THEATRE OF DEATH* (Anchor Bay, \$24.98 each); *WHEN A STRANGER CALLS* (Columbia/TriStar, \$19.95); *I BURY THE LIVING*, *WAR GODS OF THE DEEP*, and *THE ANGRY RED PLANET* (MGM, \$14.98 each); and Ted V. Mikels' *THE CORPSE GRINDERS* (Image, \$24.99).

"They've given you a number, and taken away your name." A&E Home Video presents episodes of *SECRET AGENT* (aka *DANGER MAN*), the great 1964-66 spy series starring Patrick McGeehan

The inaugural six-episode set is available on VHS for \$29.95, and DVD for \$39.95. (A&E also offers two sets of episodes of *THE SAINT* starring Roger Moore, and *AVENGERS '68* with Linda Thorson as Tara King, at identical prices.) Also debuting presently on home video



Matt Frewer returns as a more than usually eccentric Sherlock Holmes in the Muse Entertainment production of the strangely titled *SHERLOCK HOLMES IN THE ROYAL SCANDAL*. Kenneth Welsh is back as Dr. Watson, and the story features the characters Irene Adler (Liliana Komorowska) and Mycroft Holmes (R.H. Thomson), the latter unaccountably slender. It's based on the Arthur Conan Doyle stories "A Scandal in Bohemia" and "The Bruce-Partington Plans."

from MPI is the much-anticipated third DVD volume of *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, starring Jeremy Brett (\$14.98).

20th Century Fox offers a complete set on DVD of the 1974 *PLANET OF THE APES* TV series (\$49.98), and season four of *THE X FILES* (\$149.98). Patrick McGeehan's *THE PRISONER* is available in its entirety on DVD from A&E (\$149.98). And Image debuts a complete set of episodes from the unaired 1958 Boris Karloff anthology series *THE VEIL* (\$29.99).

Newly available on DVD in December are the nostalgic Disney releases *DAVY CROCKETT*, *SILLY SYMPHONIES*, *MICKY MOUSE: IN LIVING COLOR*, and the vintage documentary *DISNEYLAND*

USA (\$32.99 each) *THE HANDMAID'S TALE*, *TOPKAPI*, and *WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION* (MGM, \$19.98 each); and a 20th anniversary edition of Disney's *TRON* (\$29.99). Also scheduled for video release in December is *JURASSIC PARK III* (Universal; DVD \$26.98).

Fox finally releases the first season of *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* on DVD in January. The three-disc set contains 12 episodes, cast interviews, and an audio commentary by creator Joss Whedon on the first two episodes. Also available in January: a special edition of *THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI* (MGM); the old-school ghost chiller *THE OTHERS*, starring Nicole Kidman (Dimension); the stunning Spielberg/Kubrick collaboration *A.I. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE* (Warner Bros.), and Disney's animated fantasy *ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE* in a two-disc special edition.

*HORROR HOTEL*, the creepy 1960 favorite starring Christopher Lee, is available in three DVD versions in a wide-screen Dolby Digital edition from Elite (\$19.99), a letterboxed Troma/Roan Group version that includes a video interview with Lee (\$19.95), and as *CITY OF THE DEAD* (its original UK title) in a new restored release from VCI (\$24.99), which features director John Moxey in an interview and an audio commentary track.

Baltimore-area horror fan-turned-veteran B-movie producer Don Doherty (1977's *THE ALIEN FACTOR*) returns to moviemaking with the direct-to-video actioner *HARVESTERS*. Donna Sherman and Jaime Kalman star as violent girl-gang members who meet their murderous match in the deep woods of Maryland. Among the cast in Doherty's *TEXAS CHAINSAW*-flavored crime thriller is character actor and fellow Baltimore fan fixture George Stover, editor of the pioneering fanzine *Cinemacabre* and frequent member of John Waters' repertory company. *HARVESTERS* is available on home video in January from Key East Entertainment.

Continued on page 77

**FIEND WITHOUT A FACE**

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# SCREEN...

## and Screen AGAIN!

### Scarlet Street's DVD and Laser Review

**THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES/  
DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN**  
MGM Home Entertainment  
\$14.95 each

Horror comedies are the trickiest genre hybrid to pull off, especially in creating a balance between the two facets and bringing them off with equal elan. One of the very best ever made, *THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES* (1971), came along at a juncture when the horror film was floundering from a combination of tired formulae and public taste changing toward gritty, downbeat films reflecting the souring of the Summer of Love into the Nixon Years. Updating horror with increased gore, sex, nudity, and an attempt to appear "with it" gave off an air of desperation, and the Evil Triumphant endings rapidly became just another cliché.

*PHIBES*, which seems resolutely old school on the surface, attacked the formula from every direction and subverted it with a quirky, tongue-in-cheek attitude far more hip than a bevy of overaged, bogus hippie chicks becoming Dracula's laider. Set in 1929, it mixes splendid Art Nouveau and Art Deco sets, beautifully realized costuming, and funky old automobiles, giving it a high style light years removed from the shabby "modern" horror films being released at the time. Its mix of period jazz ("Elmer's Tune") and classical music ("War March of the Priests") flew in the face of the rock scoring then mandatory. *PHIBES* achieves cool by disdaining any faddish notions of cool.

The film is structured as a mystery; while the peculiarly executed murders and their preparations are depicted, there are not enough clues for a first-time viewer to understand quite what is going on until the midway point. Who is the cowed organist with the mute, violin-playing female assistant? Why do they celebrate with champagne and music

from a mechanical orchestra? Who are the men being murdered and why are the methods so outlandish (stung to death by bees, savaged by vampire bats, crushed by a clockwork mask)? It transpires that the assassin is Anton Phibes (Vincent Price), a renowned concert organist presumed killed in an automobile accident as he raced to be with his hospitalized wife. Phibes is offing the medical team that failed to save her, working up to chief surgeon Dr. Vesalius (Joseph Cotten), utilizing the Talmudic curses visited on Egypt.

The plot is hardly the stuff of comedy and, in fact, the script as submitted was a serious thriller. AIP producer Louis B. Heyward added the first stage directions that altered the concept before turning the project over to Vincent Price and director Robert Fuest. The latter was an especially inspired choice, since he had been a director for *THE AVENGERS*—and *PHIBES* resembles nothing so much as an extended episode of that series. Both Fuest and Price would add further lunatic embellishments.

What makes the film so intriguing is its perverse disinterest in answering all its questions. Did Phibes survive the car crash or is he resurrected from the dead? Who (or what?) is his assistant Vulnavia (Virginia North), beckoned from some brilliantly lit elsewhere? Fuest and Price even have the courage to toss away some of their very best gags—such as Phibes appearing to

pour champagne down his shirt collar—long before there is enough information to give them context.

*PHIBES* did well enough at the box office to prompt a sequel, *DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN*. In this, Phibes races an archeological expedition led by Biederbeck (Robert Quarry) to a mystical nexus of underground waters that will restore life to Phibes' wife. The Egyptian settings add an unexpected mythical touch, but the script is a muddle. Phibes has less compelling reasons for knocking off this set of victims, the murders, after the first two, are more grotesque than inventive and often depend on victims stumbling into the elaborate deathtraps. Still, if not quite up to the level of its predecessor, the sequel is lots of fun and a damn sight more worth your time than almost anything else released in 1972.

Like most of the other MGM Midnite Movies, the two Phibes DVDs are budget affairs with few extras, but one gets gorgeous transfers (*RISES AGAIN*'s image is a trifle soft in places) and the welcome restoration of Price's campy rendition "Over the Rainbow" to the closing credits of each film.

—Harry H. Long

**HATARI!**  
Paramount Home Video  
\$29.99

Paramount has released a DVD of the popular John Wayne set-in-Africa comedy/drama *HATARI!* (1962). The film showcases the exploits and misadventures of an intrepid crew of big-game trappers as they round up wild beasts for delivery to the zoos of the world. The multinational team members are portrayed by an international cast headed by Wayne, Red Buttons, Elsa Martinelli, Hardy Kruger, Gerard Blain, Bruce Cabot, and Valentin de Vargas. Dalas (Martinelli), an interloping woman photographer, is introduced to "Big Bwana" Sean Mercer (Wayne) and the others in a forced "Who's on first?"-styled round of misunderstandings. Her barely-tolerated presence launches assorted romantic rivalries and posturings.

*HATARI!* runs more than two and a half hours and takes its own sweet time





unspooling. With the exception of de Vargas, the actors all receive ample screen time for their characterizations, creating the feeling that we're actually spending the whole summer season with them. Veteran director Howard Hawks carefully



balances the pace, alternating the chase sequences with episodes of human foibles. Those who shy away from the cinematic mistreatment of animals won't find too much to complain about here, as the quarry are primarily hunted with lassos and nets. Hawks devotes as much emphasis to Dallas' ever-expanding family of orphaned baby elephants as he does to the pursuit of the dreaded rhinoceros.

Henry Mancini's score (the first soundtrack album I ever purchased) is a classic that perfectly captures the director's broad palette, offering compositions for every mood. It's an eclectic assortment of thunderous percussion, cocktail jazz arrangements ("Just for Tonight" was contributed by Johnny Mercer and Hoagy Carmichael), and playful themes for pachyderms ("Baby Elephant Walk") and ostriches ("Your Father's Feathers").

Paramount's DVD displays the film in an approximately 1.85:1 aspect ratio, adding more peripheral detail to the sweeping African vistas. The color, while never robust, is a significant improvement over the old pan-and-scan laserdisc's brownish tint. The print is in satisfactory condition overall, with only an occasional stray marking. Mancini's rhythms are sometimes submerged by the mono audio mix, but the sound effects, particularly the timbre of a pursued rhino's forced breathing and the affectionate purring of a friendly cheetah, are wonderfully realized. The disc's only supplement is a worn Paramount rerelease trailer.

—John F. Black

**THE KILLER SHREWS/  
I BURY THE LIVING**  
Madacy  
\$11.99

One of many companies releasing *THE KILLER SHREWS* on DVD, Madacy has included this film as part of a series released under the banner *KILLER CREATURE DOUBLE FEATURE*.

This collection (10 discs so far) features prints of variable quality, but for the price, they're quite acceptable, and the presentation is loads of fun, with each film beginning on the screen of a drive-in theater illustration. Extras include trailers

for the films featured, perhaps a trailer for another film (this disc contained one for 1964's *CASTLE OF BLOOD*), and a cartoon (in this case, a Gumby short called *ROBOT RUCKUS*). The cartoon is in decent condition, but the trailers are dark and scratched.

*KILLER SHREWS* was the second of two 1959 horror films from director Ray Kellogg and Hollywood Pictures Corporation. It's superior to its companion, *THE GIANT GILA MONSTER*, with a better pace and mood—and happily, no singing (though many Scarlet Streeters find pure joy in hearing *GILA MONSTER*'s "Laugh, Children, Laugh").

Dropping off supplies, Captain Thorne Sherman (James Best) and Rook Griswold (J.H. Dupree) get stranded on an island with Dr. Craigis (Baruch Lumet); his daughter, Ann (Ingrid Goude), Jerry Lacer (Ken Curtis); Randolph Baines (Gordon McLendon); and Mario (Alfredo D'Soto). Dr. Craigis is playing God by manipulating animal DNA to solve world hunger and future overpopulating. Unfortunately, his sole success has been increasing the size of killer shrews, rodents that must eat voraciously or die. The shrews suspiciously resemble dogs wearing ratty shag carpets, except for close-ups, when they resemble a mutated Kukla hand puppet. Save for the ratty shrews, the film is suspenseful, and is somewhat similar to *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* (1958), especially the final siege



*I BURY THE LIVING* (1957) is not unlike an extended episode of *TWILIGHT ZONE*. The film, shot in nine days and directed by Albert (father of Charlie) Band, concerns Robert Kraft (Richard Boone), a friendly soul who believes that, when he sticks a pin into a cemetery map, those who own the pinned plot perish. His intended bride, Ann Craig (Peggy Maurer), looks pretty and worries a lot about him. Fine performances are turned in by Theodore Bikel, Herbert Anderson, and Howard Smith. Glenn Vernon, the Gilded Boy of the Val Lewton/Boris Karloff classic *BEDLAM* (1946), also puts in an appearance.

Production designer Edward Vorkapich's nightmarish montage near the end of the film is a highlight. The film offers a nonsupernatural explanation for the grave goings on, but the ride till then is well worth taking. So park your car at the Madacy Drive-in, fright fans, and pass the popcorn, please.

—Kevin G. Shinnick

**CITIZEN KANE**  
Warner Home Video  
\$29.99

The fact that it invariably turns up at the top (or very near the top) of countless all-time-best movie lists has given Orson Welles' *CITIZEN KANE* (1941) a reputation for stodginess that's entirely undeserved. Say what you will about Welles' first and arguably best film, but any motion picture that begins with a dying man murmuring a single word that, in the context of the story, is the name of a sled and, in real life, was William Randolph Hearst's pet name for Marion Davies' vagina, is simply too wicked to be stodgy.

*CITIZEN KANE* is also too filled with the sheer, manic joy of creation to be placed on a pedestal in some dark museum corner or, worse, boxed up and forgotten like part of Charles Foster Kane's art collection. It's a work of art, yes, but it's definitely one of the lively arts!

*CITIZEN KANE*'s screenplay (cowritten by Welles and Herman Mankiewicz) was inspired by the life of publisher Hearst and took its form not only from classic newspaper tales, but detective stories as well. The mystery that needs solving is the meaning of Kane's last word—"Rosebud"—and the film follows a reporter (William Alland) as he questions the great man's associates and pieces together his life. The final piece of the puzzle remains elusive, however, to all but the audience. (As Susan Alexander, Kane's mistress and second wife, Dorothy Comadore is repeatedly shown putting together picture puzzles, the real-life habit of Marion Davies.)

Welles was just 24 when he made *CITIZEN KANE*, and already famous as the "boy wonder" of the stage and the airwaves. His notorious radio adaptation of H.G. Wells' 1898 sci-fi novel *The War of the Worlds* had made headlines in 1939 and led to a Hollywood contract with RKO. Welles packed up his Mercury Players (among them Joseph Cotten, Agnes Moorehead, Everett Sloane, and Ray Collins) and took Tinseltown by storm. Unfortunately, Tinseltown—in the form of Hearst columnist Louella Parsons—stormed back, and it was a miracle that *KANE* ever saw the light of a projector bulb. The controversy is covered in great but never less than fascinating detail in *THE BATTLE OVER CITIZEN KANE* (1995), the Oscar-nominated documentary accompanying the main feature on the second disc of this box set.

*KANE* itself is presented in its original 1.33:1 aspect ratio. The transfer—without exaggeration—is flawless, both in picture and sound. In addition to the documen-



tary, extras include audio commentaries by Roger Ebert and Peter Bogdanovich. Both are models of their kind, with Ebert having the edge on film analysis and Bogdanovich providing insights from his



personal experiences with Welles. The presentation is rounded out with story boards, call sheets, a picture gallery, ad campaigns, the press book, archival film from KANE's New York opening, and cast and crew biographies. You'll also want to highlight the sled in the special features menu for an added treat.

Don't let its reputation deter you. CITIZEN KANE really is great, and it deserves to be seen time and again.

—Richard Valley

#### BUCK ROGERS

VCI Home Entertainment  
\$29.99

The New Universal gave serial fans an early Valentine's Day present on February 6, 1939, when they shot Larry "Buster" Crabbe back into space as that other great comic strip hero, Buck Rogers. Already known as Flash Gordon from two previous Universal outings, Crabbe was well on his way to becoming the King of Serials when he was asked to strap on anti-gravity belts and fight alongside Con



stance Moore (as Wilma Deering), C. Montague Shaw (Dr. Huer), and Jackie Moran (George "Buddy" Wade) in the 25th century war against the evil ruler of

Earth, Killer Kane (Anthony Warde). Twelve chapters of space dogfights, fist-fights, treachery, trips to Saturn, and gee whizz weaponry rolled a long under the seasoned direction of Forde Beebe (who had directed Crabbe in 1938's FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS) and serial newcomer Saul A. Goodkind.

VCI Home Entertainment has released this classic serial on fairly good DVD. The serial is divided over two sides of the disc, six chapters per side. The scene selection menu has chapters for each individual chapter, but nothing for scenes within each episode. The picture quality varies slightly from chapter to chapter; some are framed to the right, some to the left, some are darker than others, but they are all about on par with a fair to good 16mm print. The disc is taken off 16mm and the sharpness of DVD betrays a lack of detail. The sound, on the other hand, is very good for a film of this age.

VCI has thrown in a few supplements as well. In addition to the standard bio/filmographies of the four leads and director Beebe, there's a photo gallery of 23 publicity stills. Both of these are available on either side of the disc. On Side Two, there is a trailer section that has original trailers for THE ADVENTURES OF RED RYDER (1940) and THE GREAT ALASKAN MYSTERY (1944), played sequentially. Unfortunately, there is no trailer for BUCK ROGERS.

While not a knock-your-socks off disc, BUCK ROGERS is certainly a good release of a fun serial. So grab your Daisy Ray Gun and a moon pie and strap yourself in for four hours of out-of-this-world fun. The 25th Century awaits!

—Jeff Allen

#### THE MIRROR CRACK'D Anchor Bay Entertainment \$24.98

What could have been a lucrative film franchise, Agatha Christie's Miss Marple mysteries, following the successful run of the Hercule Poirot mysteries, got off to a shaky start (and finish) with Guy Hamilton's THE MIRROR CRACK'D (1980). Miss Jane Marple was already well known to moviegoers through an early sixties series of films featuring the brilliant Margaret Rutherford. While these films are fine film fare, Rutherford bears no striking resemblance to the Jane Marple of Christie's novels. THE MIRROR CRACK'D cast an actress who could easily be Jane Marple, and who could have continued to serve Christie's vision of the elderly sleuth Angela Lansbury. Unfortunately, the wrong vehicle was chosen to kick start the series—for in this installment, as in the source novel, Jane Marple is laid up with a sprained ankle, and must solve the mystery without doing the actual investigation.

Lansbury's Marple does get to solve one murder on her feet at the beginning of the feature. When the projector breaks down at a community hall, Marple aptly gives the villagers the solution to the evening's showing of a black-and-white

mystery: MURDER AT MIDNIGHT. If only the film had contained more scenes like this. (Several years after this film, Lansbury began solving mysteries for CBS Television in the long-running MURDER, SHE WROTE, while Joan Hickson proved to be a viable Jane Marple in the BBC's long running series of Agatha Christie tales).

Viewing Anchor Bay's DVD of THE MIRROR CRACK'D and its eclectic blend of talented actors, one constantly wishes that Lansbury had been given more to do.



With her blue eyes a-twinkle, she is reduced to listening to other characters describe a fateful event in the lives of a sleepy British community suddenly overrun with Hollywood types. One by one, they come to Marple's cottage, dispensing information—a device which might have worked better on stage, had THE MIRROR CRACK'D been rethought as a theatrical piece.

Still, theatrical antics of high caliber are supplied by the mystery itself, thanks to the star-studded supporting cast, with Hollywood represented by such high-caliber stars as Elizabeth Taylor (as actress Marna Rudd), Rock Hudson (director Jason Rudd), Tony Curtis (producer Marty Fenn), and Kim Novak (actress Lola Brewster). (The plot concerns the "accidental" poisoning of a high-strung, movie-loving villager at the village's Manor House—could Marina Rudd could have been the intended victim?—and the repercussions that ensue.) Making the most of each syllable of screenwriters Jonathan Hale and Barry Sandler's deliciously bitchy dialogue (the brittle barbs between Novak and Taylor, as the two aging screen queens, are highlights), Hamilton keeps the plot in motion with a pace reminiscent of his GOLDFINGER (1964) days.

Anchor Bay Entertainment delivers a very nice presentation, with a two-page essay on Agatha Christie by Avie Horn on the disc's fold-out insert, an oversaturated original theatrical trailer, two television spots (presented full-frame), and seven detailed bios of the actors playing "Miss Jane Marple" and "Suspects, Victims, and Innocent Bystanders." The film itself, although enhanced for widescreen TVs, looks a bit on the overlit side, giving the cast a rosy pastel tone to their skin. Overall it's a delightful film, and the opportunity to see this cast interacting should not be missed. Playing "Spot



Pierce Brosnan" (in his major film debut) adds yet another layer of pleasure.

—Anthony Dale

**TWICE-TOLD TALES**  
MGM Home Entertainment  
\$14.95

Filmed during one of the busiest years of Vincent Price's film career, *TWICE-TOLD TALES* is not one of his best, but remains an entertaining diversion after nearly 40 years. The three tales are based on the writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and all star and are narrated by Price.

The first story, "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," begins with Alex Medbourne (Price) comforting Carl Heidegger (Sebastian Cabot), his best friend, still grieving for his fiancée, Sylvia (Mari Blanchard), dead some 38 years. What Carl doesn't know is that Alex was having an affair with Sylvia. One night, they discover her corpse has been preserved by the water dripping over her casket. Soon, the two friends restore their youth—and Sylvia's life. This awakens old jealousies and reveals deceptions, leading them all down a path to destruction.

The second story is "Rappaccinni's Daughter." Giacomo Rappaccinni (Price) has shielded his daughter, Beatrice (Joyce Taylor), from the dangers of the world by injecting her with poison from a plant he has cultivated. This renders her touch fatal, and she must have regular injections or die. Beatrice falls in love with Giovanni Guasconti (Brett Halsey, who played Price's nephew in 1959's *THE RETURN*



*OF THE FLY*), and Rappaccinni realizes he cannot control her emotional life. Instead of freeing her, Rappaccinni entraps the man she loves by treating him with the poison. Rappaccinni soon learns the destructive force of his obsessive love for his daughter.

The last tale, "The House of the Seven Gables," is by far the best of the three, and the only one based on a novel instead of a short story. Gerald Pyncheon (Price) returns to his birthplace, defiantly ignoring the curse that has led to the death of all his male ancestors. There's a fortune hidden in the house, which his sister, Hannah (Jacqueline de Wit), has been attempting to find for years. Upon arrival, Gerald's wife, Alice (Beverly Garland), starts to feel a strong connection to the past. Pyncheon calls upon an old enemy (Richard Denning) to help find the treasure, setting in motion a chain of events that leads to the resolution of the curse.

The direction (Sidney Salkow) and score (Richard LaSalle) are both adequate, but not extravagant. Still, some scenes provide a few chills even today, due in no small part to the moody cinematography. The screenplay (Robert E. Kent) offers a few choice lines for the cast. Vincent Price is in good form, though he must have been able to coast through the three fairly undemanding roles. Sebastian Cabot's performance is melancholy and sweet, but ends in a delicious moment of revenge-filled rage. Joyce Taylor delivers the perfect balance of venom and love. Jacqueline de Wit is a wonderful foil for Price and delivers many of her lines with ominous gusto.

The transfer is from a splendid print in bold, unfaded Technicolor. The details are sharp and occasionally breathtaking, particularly in Rappaccinni's garden. The mono soundtrack is strong and clear. The only extra is a theatrical trailer, but that's no cause for complaint, since the film itself looks so good and the price is so low.

—Ron Morgan

**ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS/  
WRITTEN ON THE WIND**  
The Criterion Collection  
\$39.95 each

In a canny bid to recreate the success of the 1954 Technicolor melodrama, *MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION*, Universal reunited director Douglas Sirk, producer Ross Hunter, cinematographer Russell Metty, Rock Hudson, and Jane Wyman for *ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS* (1956). Sirk teamed Hudson with the formidable talents of Robert Stack and Lauren Bacall for 1957's *WRITTEN ON THE WIND*, again with Russell Metty. A true *auteur* skilled in transforming studio assignments into strikingly personal statements, Sirk used melodrama to expose the material affluence and spiritual poverty of fifties America.

A veteran of UFA and the German Expressionist theater of the twenties, Sirk used mirrors to denote introspection, and encoded costumes and decor with color symbolism. In these two films, each character's inner state is so clearly articulated by the actor's position in the frame that dialogue is almost incidental. Taking full advantage of the Technicolor spectrum, Sirk bathed the screen in incandescent red, wintry blue, and canary yellow, creating a dreamlike hyperreality.

In *ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS*, wealthy widow Carey Scott (Jane Wyman, whose character name is a reversal of the diminutive Scott Carey of 1957's *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN*) becomes a social pariah when she falls in love with gardener Ron Kirby (Rock Hudson). An anti-intellectual, instinctive man, Ron has never read Thoreau's *Walden*; "He just lives it," Ron's friend tells Carey. The couple's heartfelt, forbidden passion makes the country club set feel the vacuity of lives centered on cocktails and social functions.

The romantic, autumnal air of *ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS* is scant prepa-

ration for the operatic drama of *WRITTEN ON THE WIND*. In an eye-rolling, teeth-gnashing performance, Robert Stack tears down the house as Kyle Hadley, an alcoholic, suicidal playboy tormented by imagined infidelities and fears of impotence. Seeking redemption in the arms of decent, hardworking secretary Lucy (Lauren Bacall), Kyle finds love no match for the burden of unearned privilege. The Hadleys are white trash billionaires, like his nymphomaniacal sister Marylee (Dorothy Ma. one), Kyle feels more at home in a scuzzy gin mill than in the family mansion. Hudson plays Kyle's lifelong companion Mitch, farm boy guest in this Texan House of Atreus. (Also in the cast: Grant Williams, who played the aforementioned Shrinking Man the same year as *WRITTEN ON THE WIND*, and at the same studio.)



Subversively bucking the tide of the era's rigidly defined notions of masculinity, Rock Hudson displayed an acute awareness of outsider status. Hudson's characters project a stoic endurance, a sense of secret consolation for the pain of life taken in concealing its depth. Gay subtexts are impossible to ignore. Both films include awkward exchanges in which the megahunk is quizzed on his unlikely bachelor status; Ron's war buddy laughs out loud when he learns Ron has a girlfriend; impotence serves as a synonym for homosexuality.

Part of the lasting appeal of Sirk's vision lies in the fact that the director viewed American life with a cynicism at least a decade ahead of its time. (In the interval between *HEAVEN* and *WIND*, Sirk directed Fred MacMurray and Barbara Stanwyck in 1956's *THERE'S ALWAYS TOMORROW* which painted the all-American family in a similarly jaundiced light.)

The supplements are of the highest caliber. *ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS* includes half an hour of conversation with Sirk from a 1979 BBC program, an essay by Rainer Werner Fassbinder (who remade *ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS* in 1974 as *ALL FEAR EATS THE SOUL*), a still gallery, and a trailer. *WRITTEN ON THE WIND* provides an annotated Sirk filmography that puts the usual single-paragraph bio to shame. Though the feature films are 16:9 enhanced, the supplements are not. Both films are presented in stunning 178:1 transfers.

Michael Draine



**THE MAN FROM PLANET X**  
MGM Home Entertainment  
\$14.95

In 1950, Edgar G. Ulmer came home. He had just finished shooting his fourth film in as many years with a decent budget and a generous shooting schedule, turning his back finally on Poverty Row—or so he probably thought.

Alas, he was wrong. The only thing Ulmer's agent had to offer was a script called *THE MAN FROM PLANET X*, one of several projects developed after the success of *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* (1951). The authors/producers Jack Pollexfen and Aubrey Wisberg didn't have much money and needed a director who could also handle the technical aspects of the production, including miniatures and trick shots. Ulmer was the perfect man for the job.

Though poorly scripted, especially in its dialogue, *PLANET X* is actually an early gem of the alien-from-dying-planet-invades-earth genre. The implication is that the reactions of Earth's residents will determine whether a benign cohabitation or a hostile takeover will result. The attitudes presented here, both human and alien, are more varied than those in *THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD* (1951), although *PLANET X*'s script is not quite up to properly exploring them. William Schallert's Dr. Mears first tortures the alien, but later tries to save its life (both attempts to gain its scientific knowledge). The alien is defensive or benign or hostile depending on its interactions with the humans it encounters. Such subtleties are not apparent in other Pollexfen/Wisberg scripts and it's tempting to credit them to Ulmer.

There's no doubt that the film's visual plan is purely due to Ulmer functioning as the sort of one-man show that probably



guaranteed his continued residence on Poverty Row. The handling of miniatures bear certain touches which reappear in various Ulmer films no matter the technical crew, so there is little doubt that they're his handiwork. An upward angled

shot of the tower in which the scientists reside is one of Ulmer's charcoal production drawings, pressed into service as a matte shot. The Scottish moors location with its frequent fogs, allow Ulmer to disguise just how limited some exteriors are; for other sets, Ulmer and his producers lucked out by gaining access to leftovers from *JOAN OF ARC* (1948).

Above all it is Ulmer's camera-work that keeps the production from looking as cheap it was, although a few rear-projected backdrops let him down. Individual shots are beautifully composed and fluid tracking shots are brilliantly conceived and executed. One early example obscures Robert Clarke's face as he begins the voiceover narration, a trick that makes his character a universal figure. Later, Ulmer's ornate technique simply disguises the pathetically small contingent of villagers and military personnel. Popular wisdom has it that a sow's ear cannot be transformed into a silk purse; thank heavens Edgar G. Ulmer apparently never paid attention.

This *Midnite Movies* DVD is a no-frills package like the majority of their releases. On the other hand, you can find it for well below the \$15 suggested retail in many stores and the print used, despite minor speckling and scratches, is of very high quality.

—Harry H. Long

**IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD**  
MGM Home Entertainment  
\$19.98

The lunacy begins when Smiler Grogan (Jimmy Durante) speeds past several cars and a truck on a lonely stretch of the California Interstate, careens off the road, and plunges down a ravine. The passengers in the other vehicles (and what passengers Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Ethel Merman, Mickey Rooney, Buddy Hackett, Edie Adams, Dorothy Provine, Jonathan Winters) stop to render assistance and Smiler tells them about a fortune buried in Santa Rosita State Park—under “a big double-ya!” After Smiler kicks the bucket (literally), the others decide how to divvy up the fortune among themselves. Tempers flare, and soon enough it becomes a wild free-for-all to see who can make it to the fortune before the others get there.

Never realizing that the police know their every move, the madcap bunch break almost every law in the book short of murder, let alone a few bones. Captain Culpepper (Spencer Tracy) of the Santa Rosita Police, while keeping his eyes on this lot, ponders his retirement and his low pension from the Department. He decides to join in the ruckus and get the loot for himself, as do a few characters picked up along the way, played by Phil Silvers, Dick Shawn (the epitome of the psychedelic sixties), Terry Thomas, Peter Falk, and Eddie “Rochester” Anderson (the last two as a couple of cabbies).



Never before (or since) has such a cast of comedians been assembled for one production, and they're all in top form (especially Merman at her bellowing best). Cameo appearances by Don Knotts, Jack Benny, The Three Stooges, Joe E. Brown, Jerry Lewis, Buster Keaton, and dozens more all add to the fun. Produced and directed by Stanley Kramer, the film has nonstop laughs and is a work true genius.

*IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD* is presented in 16:9 widescreen letterbox format from the original 35mm theatrical version. The print clarity is remarkable, and the audio flawless. Special features of this two-sided DVD include *SOMETHING A LITTLE LESS SERIOUS* (a well-made documentary about the making of the picture), extended scenes, the theatrical trailer, and the 1970 reissue trailer. No liner notes, though—apparently, MGM didn't see fit to include them with this release.

—Dan Clayton

**A BUCKET OF BLOOD**  
MGM Home Entertainment  
\$19.98

The story behind *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* (1959) is almost legendary. Roger Corman owed American International Pictures a movie. AIP had just finished shooting *DIARY OF A HIGH SCHOOL BRIDE* (1959) and the sets were still standing. Corman asked partner Charles Griffith to look over the sets and write a script utilizing them. The script he came up with was a horror comedy called *THE YELLOW DOOR*. Five days, \$45,000, and a title change later, Corman had completed shooting his first comedy. *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* introduced the film world to the Beatnik Generation (there had been no other film before that took an honest look at the lifestyle) and debuted Dick Miller's signature character, Walter Paisley. Not bad for a little 66 minute film that still holds up over 40 years later.

Owing much to *THE MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM* (1933), *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* is a tight, fast paced film with a droll wit and dark humor. Timid busboy Walter works at the coffee house, *The Yellow Door*, and quietly idolizes the beatnik artists who frequent the establishment. When he accidentally kills his landlord's cat, he encases the corpse in

*Continued on page 30*





by Anthony Dale

**C**inemaScope aside, Marilyn Monroe was the most delightful addition to films in the fifties. Journeying from bit parts and garage-wall calenders, Monroe made a mark on the collective American conscious. Volumes upon volumes have been written about Marilyn the woman, Marilyn the sex symbol, Marilyn the misunderstood—and Marilyn the “murdered.” With the release of 20th Century Fox’s Marilyn Monroe Diamond Collection (as well as two recent MGM Home Video offerings) it becomes an easy task to talk about Marilyn: The Actress.

The Diamond Collection gathers, for the first time on DVD, five noteworthy Marilyn performances, and the made-for-TV documentary *MARILYN: THE LAST DAYS*. Each film in the collection is also available independently, save for the worthwhile documentary, at a very reasonable retail price. Fox has restored the films to their original glory and in the process added an informative restoration demonstration, with side-by-side comparative film clips, to

each disc. Also included on each disc are trailers. Fox has created new soundtracks for each of the films, using the Dolby Digital format, but the films retain their original soundtracks as well. Where available, Marilyn-related Fox MOVIE TONE NEWSREELS are included, the highlight being “Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell in *Cement*” on the *GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES* disc.

*MARILYN: THE LAST DAYS* contains an incredible restoration of its own: a 35-minute version of *SOMETHING’S GOT TO GIVE*, a George Cukor production that Marilyn was trying desperately to complete at the time of her death. The feature presents a very fragile, but very adult Marilyn, teamed with Dean Martin and Cyd Charisse in a reworking of the Enoch Arden tale, told previously with gusto as the Irene Dunne/Cary Grant classic *MY FAVORITE WIFE* (1940). (The film was eventually completed in 1963, with James Garner and Polly Bergen replacing Martin and Charisse, and adorable Doris Day taking over for Monroe, as *MOVE OVER, DARLING*.) *MARILYN: THE LAST DAYS* proves to be yet another of Fox’s no-holds-barred documentaries,

which gallantly—and depressingly—presents the ups and downs of the final months of Monroe’s life and career.

The Diamond Collection shows off Marilyn. The Comedienne, with only one title displaying her powers as a serious actress. It took the formation of her own production company and a George Axelrod adaptation of a hit Broadway play by William Inge to prove that Marilyn Monroe had the right stuff as an actress. Taking on the role of Cherie, the chantoosie with a heart of gold, in *BUS STOP* (1956), Marilyn gives a tour de force performance. Cherie is the “angel” of rodeo cowboy Bo’s dreams, but dreams comprise Bo’s entire experience with women. Director Joshua Logan keeps his CinemaScope frame active and gets one and a half great performances from his two leading actors. Don Murray is just right as Bo, but his performance is better suited to the stage: he’s big, he’s loud, and he’s often over the top. Happily, his performance is balanced by Marilyn’s less-is-more approach. It’s a perfor-

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*Incandescent Icon: Marilyn Monroe on DVD*



## SCREEN AND SCREEN AGAIN

Continued from page 28

clay and presents it at work as a piece of art. Immediately hailed as a master sculptor, he becomes part of the crowd he adores but must meet the demand for more sculptures. Soon, Walter begins



dabbling in grotesque life sized human objets d'art.

MGM Home Entertainment acquired A BUCKET OF BLOOD as part of the Orion Home Video library and has released it to DVD to the delight of its fans. The print is beautiful, nary a scratch or speck to be found. The original mono soundtrack is likewise splendid. MGM has released a very bare bones disc, an impressive 24 chapter stops and Spanish and French subtitles being the only special features (Although the keeprcase clearly lists the original theatrical trailer as a supplement, it is nowhere on the disc.) A commentary track with Corman or Miller would have been desirable, but just having a great copy of this film on disc is reason enough to celebrate

—Jeff Allen

### STRANGE ILLUSION

All Day Entertainment

\$19.95

Hamlet was the prince of a spot

Called Denmark

There never was such a frantic guy

Either before or since

(He was a dreamboy)

And like a hole in the head

Denmark needed that prince.

—Frank Loesser

It's not uncommon for the plays of William Shakespeare to be updated, adapted, sometimes obiterated, but the forties put a real slangy spin on things, particularly in the case of HAMLET. Frank Loesser wrote the above-quoted lyrics for Betty Hutton to blast forth with in RED HOT AND BLUE (1949). Frank and Betty had been beaten to the punch some four years earlier, though, when Poverty Row's PRC released cult director Edgar G. Ulmer's STRANGE ILLUSION (1945), a bizarre film noir seemingly inspired by a boogie-woogie Bard.

Actually, STRANGE ILLUSION's debt to HAMLET is slight, beyond offering a hero (James Lydon as Paul Cartwright) whose troubled dreams clue him in on his pop's murder, and a rat (Warren William as Brett Curtis) who's set his sights on the wealthy widow (Sally Eilers as Virginia

Cartwright, fondly referred to by her kids as The Princess). Madness plays a part in the plot, too, but there's no Ophelia substitute waiting to pop her cork. Instead, Paul fakes his own insanity, the better to get the goods on a crooked psychiatrist (Charles Arnt as Professor Muhlbach) in league with Curtis.

James Lydon is best known for playing a loony, cracked-voiced teenager in a certain series of Paramount comedies, and it's tempting to refer to STRANGE ILLUSION as HENRY ALDRICH FLIPS HIS LID. On the other hand, Warren William played one of the screen's most famous detectives, Philo Vance, and it requires some adjusting to accept him as (literally) a lady killer with a pash for underage bobby-soxers. Both Lydon and William are pros, though, as is Sally Eilers (unlike HAMLET's Gertrude, innocent of any wrongdoing), and they make the



story work Lydon even gets by with spouting such heartfelt Shakespearean sonnets as "Hello, vixen, what's mixin'" and "Are you missin' my kissin'?"

The DVD is part of All Day's Edgar G. Ulmer Collection, distributed by Image Entertainment. Good prints of old PRCs are hard to come by, and STRANGE ILLUSION is somewhat dark and dupey, but it's more than serviceable (According to the box notes, it's a digital master from a 35mm preservation positive.) The extras, which include trailers of other Ulmer films, photos, a booklet reproducing the film's pressbook, and the featurette THE KING OF PRC, put this release firmly in the "must get" column for all Ulmer fans

—Drew Sullivan

### VILLAGE OF THE GIANTS

MGM Home Entertainment

\$14.95

Science-fiction maven Bert I. Gordon so admired H.G. Wells' 1904

novel *The Food of the Gods* that he filmed two putative adaptations, VILLAGE OF THE GIANTS (1965) and FOOD OF THE GODS (1976). Neither one captured the satirical vision of Wells' fantasy. VILLAGE concerns a precocious boy scientist nicknamed Genius (Ronny Howard), who discovers a foodlike "goo" that subjects its consumers to gigantism. His teen role model Mike (Tommy Kirk) envisions an opportunity for profit but their good-natured scheme goes awry when rowdy interlopers Fred (Beau Bridges), Merrie (Joy Harmon), and Jean (Tisha Sterling) stumble into Hainesville with their thrill-seeking pals. The troublemakers steal the goo and soon begin throwing their considerable weight around town.

The film's remainder depicts the totalitarian rule of the watusing giants and its eventual overthrow by Mike and his cohorts, Horsey (Johnny Crawford) and Red (Tom Basil, who also choreographed the dancing). Although denouncing parental control over adolescents, Fred's bullying of Hainesville's youth reveals his hypocrisy. Some of his pronouncements, such as requiring adults to carry I.D. cards and conform to an official curfew, could have inspired AJP's youthful rebellion epic WILD IN THE STREETS (1968).

Despite the slight satire, the picture's dominant motif remains the gyrating flesh that permeates the activities of both the "good" and "bad" teens. When the trespassers experience their sudden growth spurt, they literally bust out of their clothes. While it's logical that the clothing wouldn't be affected by the goo, the opportunity to display protruding pulchritude probably informed the filmmakers' thinking. Ronny Howard's Mayberry persona seems ill-suited to this milieu, the condescending use of the word "goo" is more appropriate in a Tommy Kirk "Merlin Jones" family comedy. VILLAGE rather suggests a bump-and-grind show for moppets.

MGM's DVD is presented full frame sans supplements, sacrificing a smidgen of visual information from the sides while occasionally appearing squeezed. The elements are in reasonably good shape, although rear-projected special effects show some grain. The disc represents the uncut version: TV prints generally delete the musical stylings of Freddy "Boom





Boom" Cannon, The Beau Brummels, and pretty-boy crooner Mike Clifford (who later performed the role of Teen Angel in a stage production of GREASE), as well as the money shots of Horsey dangling from the giantess Merrie's cleavage

—John F. Black

**DRACULA/THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE**  
MPI Home Video  
\$24.98

After his success with DARK SHADOWS, producer Dan Curtis was wooed for more of the same from TV executives. He turned his attention to the classics he'd been raiding for DS storylines and produced a series of adaptations (including THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY in 1973), many quite faithful to their source material and some even praised by the same critics who sniffed disdainfully at the ongoing supernatural adventures at Collinwood. The first, THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE (1968), even garnered six Emmy nominations, including Best Drama

Ian McClellan Hunter's script is probably the most faithful adaptation of Stevenson's story (he even dares to present Jekyll with a virginal Victorian



sweetheart), and only its video origins and adherence to TV syntax of the time (the build to miniclimaxes prior to commercials) keep it from taking its rightful place among the best dramatizations. Curtis mounted the production in Canada on an enormous soundstage, which allowed for the building of Jekyll's entire house. Staging the production in long, "live" takes with multiple cameras may simply have been a cost-cutting measure, but it allowed director Charles Jarrott to follow Jekyll through excellent sets from his upstairs bedroom, through his house, out into the garden, and on to the laboratory, giving the production an expensive and expansive look.

What really makes the production superior, though, is the top flight cast. Leo Genn and Denholm Elliott appear as two of Jekyll's scientific colleagues, Torin Thatcher has a marvelously cranky cameo as an adversary, and Oscar Homolka appears as a malevolent chemist. Billie Whitelaw is exceptional as the tart Jekyll keeps and sadistically brutalizes. Anchoring these splendid performances (as indeed he must, since he is rarely ab-

sent) is Jack Palance in the dual title role. His Jekyll is no bland Milquetoast; early on, there are indications that the demon Hyde lurks within, suppressed but seething for the opportunity to get out. Hunter's teleplay contains the expected drug-addiction similes—possibly more than other versions—but he and Palance add the intriguing connotation that chemicals don't liberate bad behavior, but merely offer addicts an excuse to reveal their true selves.

A few years later, Curtis and Palance reteamed for DRACULA (1973), which was filmed in England and Yugoslavia, lending it a unique look among film versions of Stoker's novel (although the production design is primarily based on Hammer's films and lifts numerous incidents from them). The results are not entirely without interest, but not as successful. Curtis, directing here, is not much for subtexts, although he is often an exceptional visual stylist. It was at his urging that scripter Richard Matheson created a "great love" for the Count, discovering her doppelganger (Fiona Lewis) in a newspaper photograph prompts his relocation to London. This allows Palance a few scenes impersonating the historic Vlad Tepes—the first film to do so—and apparently impressed Francis Ford Coppola, who "borrowed" the idea for BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA (1992).

Curtis and Matheson streamlined the story drastically to cram it into 100 minutes. There are no vampire brides, no Renfield, and the cadre of vampire hunters is reduced to Doctors Van Helsing and Seward (played by Nigel Davenport and Simon Ward, both of whom are colorless here). The delicious Lewis, especially when she begins exhibiting vampiric tendencies on her deathbed, is the only one giving any acting competition to Palance, who turns his limited screen time into a tour de force combining demon, ardent lover, and lost soul.

While Curtis' DRACULA may not be the best ever, it has much to recommend it and it deserves a far better digital presentation than it has been accorded. The image is so blurry that the titles can barely be read. The colors shift frequently. While there may be problems making the mid-sixties videotape of JEKYLL AND HYDE look crisp, there's no reason the transfer accorded DRACULA should be so appalling. It's doubtful DVD purists will be amused, especially at \$25 and with few extras. (Both Curtis and Palance contribute brief interviews, but why not commentaries?) MPI and Dan Curtis productions apparently plan more DVD releases, but if this one is any indication of their quality it's doubtful they'll find many takers.

—Harry H. Long

**THE BLOOD BEAST TERROR**  
Image Entertainment  
\$24.99

Peter Cushing once cited THE BLOOD BEAST TERROR (1967) as his worst film

The statement was obviously made before he appeared in INCENSE FOR THE DAMNED (1970) or MONSTER ISLAND (1980), though admittedly this is not one of his better showcases.

Obviously "inspired" by Hammer's THE REPTILE, made a year earlier, the story opens with an explorer going deep into the jungle (a British forest and some stock footage), then jumps abruptly to the title sequence, wherein a coachman (Leslie Anderson) finds a wounded man and is frightened by something he sees offscreen. The injured man is brought to the home of scientist Dr. Mallinger (Robert Flemyng), where he expires, arousing the suspicion of Inspector Quennell (Cushing), who is at the house investigating another killing. (That Quennell doesn't immediately suspect Mallinger doesn't say much for the inspector's detective skills.) Mallinger's lovely daughter Clare (Wanda Ventham) seems to attract all of the men in the area. She and several of her father's students put on an entertainment, reminiscent of a stage version of FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN (1967) had Tod Slaughter directed. More people die, including Mallinger's scarred butler, Granger (Kevin Stoney), who seemed to get his jollies torturing a pet falcon—which objected by killing him. The evidence is so overwhelming that the police finally think Mallinger has something to do with the murders, but by then he and Clare have fled. Quennell and his lovely daughter (Vanessa Howard) follow.

At last, it is revealed that Clare is actually a mutated Death's Head Moth, feeding on the blood of young men. She is waiting for daddy to create a mate for her, but he destroys it, instead, foolishly right in front of her. Guess who next falls prey to her claws? (Moths have claws?) The film ends with the transformed Clare



trying to fly away, only to stop when Quennell starts a fire. The poor moth, of course, cannot resist the flame



It's hard to believe Tigon thought this film would be a challenge to arch-rival Hammer. The costuming, period props, and acting are all very Hammeresque, but the direction by Vernon Sewell is unimaginative, with flat lighting that doesn't show the sets or performers to best advantage. They try to compensate for this by some very erratic and abrupt editing cuts. The actors all try very hard, and deserve better. Cushing, of course, is a marvel, and character actor Roy Hudd does his very best Michael Ripper as a comic, cockney morgue attendant.

On the plus side, the Image transfer is fine, with the colors and sound probably in better shape than it's been for decades. There are no extras, not even a trailer, and the menu is simple and bland.

—Kevin G. Shinnick

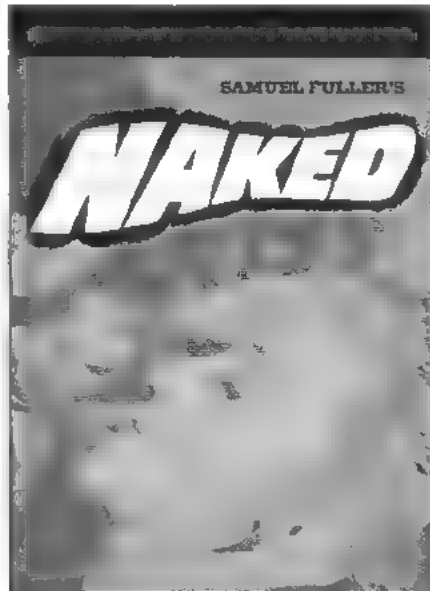
**THE NAKED KISS**  
The Criterion Collection  
\$29.95

The literally smashing opening scene of *THE NAKED KISS* (1964) is infamous among aficionados of pulp cinema, and justifiably so. A prostitute named Kelly (Constance Towers) whacks the living daylight out of her drunken pimp with her purse to the sounds of hyped-up jazz music. Fighting back, the pimp pulls off Kelly's wig to reveal a head as bald as Otto Preminger's. Once she's floored him, Kelly takes 75 bucks from the guy's wallet, then calmly reapplies her hair and makeup as the credits roll. How's that for an attention grabber? *THE NAKED KISS* is one of the prime offerings from cult director/writer Samuel Fuller and, no matter how you respond to this man's craft (Is it camp? Is it daringly subversive? Or is it a pile of trash?), chances are you won't be bored.

When next we see Kelly, she's arriving in the small town of Grantville (the title on the town's movie marquee is that of Fuller's previous film, 1963's *SHOCK CORRIDOR*). She's still selling herself, but under the cover of hawking champagne. Plainclothes cop Griff (Anthony Eisley) instinctively senses her sordid profession, approves of it, and sleeps with her. (He also gets to taste her champagne.) Meaning to be helpful, he recommends she get a job at the local pickup joint across the river. Instead, Kelly does what any self-respecting streetwalker would do: she becomes a nurse in the town hospital, helping crippled children with her own special brand of tough love. ("Whaddaya want, a medal?" she snaps at a little boy anxious to display his prowess on his new crutches.) What's more, she attracts the attention of the town's wealthy, leading citizen, Grant (Michael Dante), making the jealous Griff hopping mad. As any moviegoer knows, a former whore's road to happiness is a bumpy one and just wait until you find out about Grant's dirty little secret!

This is the kind of movie in which a madam named Candy (Virginia Grey) refers to herself proudly as a "stable boss" and her girls as her "bonbons." There's

one eager-to-please bonbon named Hatrack (Edy Williams), and a student nurse with hooking aspirations named Buff (Marie Devereux). Unable to completely leave her more violent instincts behind, Kelly gives the latter a belt across the mouth to change her mind about turning



tricks. "You'll become a social problem, a medical problem, a mental problem!" she warns. The dialogue, thankfully, remains on this overbaked level. Griff, sizing up Kelly, declares that this hot-looking dish is "enough to make a bulldog bust his chain." Grant, startled to hear that Kelly enjoys the poetry of Lord Byron, makes this priceless assessment: "Intellect is seldom a feature of physical beauty." (Keep that thought in mind next time you pick someone up at the local watering hole.)

Fuller, who unashamedly mixes florid sentiment with sleaze, reaches a pinnacle of the bizarre with a maudlin, albeit haunting, song about the Bluebird of Happiness, performed by a roomful of children, propped up on their crutches and wearing pirate hats! The tune is later reprised most effectively in the creepy scene in which Kelly stumbles upon the skeleton in her boyfriend's closet.

As Kelly, Towers shows more gusto than talent, while her two leading men, Dante and Eisley, are standard, unappealing, B-movie stiff. The supporting cast consists of two seasoned professionals (Virginia Grey and Patsy Kelly, as a belching nurse named "Mac") and a whole slew of mostly terrible, amateurish performers who were more than likely never heard from again.

The Criterion DVD is letterboxed and the print only suffers from some minor scratches. The packaging includes the appropriately over-the-top trailer ("The Shock and Shame Story of a Night Girl! Not for the squeamish!"), and an essay on Fuller and the film by Michael Dante. It's one of those "You have to see it to believe it" movies you've probably read about for years. Now's your chance to experience it,

bonbons and all, in full black-and-white splendor.

—Barry Monush

**THE PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES**  
Anchor Bay Entertainment  
\$29.98

"Only the Lord of the Dead Could Unleash Them!" Two years before radiation raised George Romero's army of American ghouls in *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*, England's Hammer Films embraced the ancient art of voodoo, spreading *THE PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES* (1966) over a helpless Cornish village. Directed by John Gilling, Hammer's only overt foray into the macabre world of zombie thrillers was, even by the studio's modest standards, a low-budget quickie designed as a second-feature throwaway.

Once completed, however, *PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES* proved to be an energetic, atmospheric chiller. Working from an intriguing script by John Elder and Peter Bryan (whose original story owes inspirational debt to 1932's *WHITE ZOMBIE*), Gilling delivers 90 minutes of stylishly staged shocks, jolts, and suspense.

Anchor Bay released *THE PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES* through its impressive DVD line, The Hammer Collection. The total package (with violet-shaded cover art that emphasizes the movie's eerie graveyard ambience) offers a splendid widescreen presentation of the feature itself. The disc also includes a collection of trailers that helps place *PLAGUE* within the context of its 1966 release.

Of particular historical interest is a trailer that reveals the William Castle-style promotional campaign developed by 20th Century Fox. The studio sold the movie to stateside audiences on the bottom half of a bill called the "Eeriest Fright Show in Town," pairing *PLAGUE* with another 1966 Hammer release, *DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS*. An insert card reproduces the poster art from that



heavily hyped, teen-targeted twin feature ("Boys! Fight Back... Bite Back with Dracula Fangs! Girls! Defend Yourself with Zombie Eyes!")



Highlighting its place in Hammer history the **PLAGUE** DVD also includes the half-hour documentary "Mummies, Werewolves, and the Living Dead," one of 13 installments in British TV's retrospective series, **THE WORLD OF HAMMER**. (The programs are narrated by Oliver Reed, whose best-known work for the studio, 1961's **THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF** is noted in this episode)

As for the film itself, **PLAGUE** looks terrific on disc. In addition to spinning its creepy Cornish horror tale, the movie offers a wealth of terrifying treats for faithful Hammer fans—from Roy Ashton's ghastly zombie makeup and James Bernard's pulse pounding score to a green-tinted nightmare scene (in which masses of dead bodies rise from their graves) and one doozy of a decapitation.

The cast features the incomparable Andre Morell—Dr. Watson in Hammer's **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES** (1959)—in a rare starring role. Morell plays Sir James Forbes, a doctor trying to deduce the cause of a mysterious malady that's slowly but surely wiping out the village populace. John Carson plays sinister Clive Hamilton, the oily, aristocratic villain of the tale. In vintage **WHITE ZOMBIE** fashion, the diabolical squire follows the example of Bela Lugosi's Murder Legendre, resurrecting corpses to use as slave labor in his tin mine.

Brook Williams (as the bewildered young town physician), Diane Clare (as Forbes' daughter), and Jacqueline Pearce (star of Gilling's 1966 **THE REPTILE**) offer solid support in this well-acted, generally overlooked thriller. Rounding out the cast, Hammer stalwart Michael Ripper enjoys one of his more sizable roles for the studio, playing a stouthearted village constable called Sergeant Swift.

The taut, tidy chiller features no major Hammer stars (no Cushing, no Lee) and lacks the ready-made following amassed by the studio's ongoing *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* series, but judged on its own merits—and presented to its best advantage in this highly recommended DVD—**THE PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES** deserves latter-day praise and reappraisal as one of Hammer's finest stand-alone chillers.

—Terry Pace

**SECRET AGENT Set 1**  
A&E Home Video  
\$33.49

Patrick McGoochan's first television series. **SECRET AGENT** is best remembered today for Johnny Rivers' catchy theme song, "Secret Agent Man," which wailed, "They've given you a number and taken away your name." That, ironically, was part of the premise of McGoochan's better known cult show, **THE PRISONER**, the story of a former spy held captive in a Disneyland of terror.

**SECRET AGENT** (known as **DANGER MAN** in the England) is unjustly ignored and is, in many ways, the superior series. Launched in 1961 as a half hour drama, it was revived in 1964 as an hour program

when the James Bond craze was in full swing. Never a roaring success, it ran for a respectable 45 episodes over two years. **SECRET AGENT** is unpretentious and smooth, a *film noir* spy show and the best of the spy crop that rose in the plentiful Bond-era sixties. The series' scripts are complex and witty—more John Le Carré spy procedural than Ian Fleming superspy serial—with agent John Drake (McGoohan) something of an antihero, often questioning his superior's values and the stated "necessity" for what he is doing. Drake is not a 007 clone, never kissing a girl and rarely using a gun. More often than not, he talks rather than fights his way out of a sticky situation. McGoochan, who had turned down the Bond role in 1961 because of its sex and violence, is an impressive protagonist, thoughtful but also with a good left hook.



This first collection of episodes features the top-notch "Fish on the Hook," in which Drake must identify and rescue the mastermind behind Britain's Middle Eastern spy network; "Yesterday's Enemies," a clever meditation on the double-dealing and changing alliances inherent in the spy game ("Yesterday's enemies, today's friends," muses one character); "No Marks for Servility," in which Drake masquerades as a servant for a ruthless financier; "Fair Exchange," a spy mission involving assassination, a double-cross, and an old friend; "The Battle of the Cameras," with a tuxedoed Drake in a casino as a Bond-type adventurer; and "A Room in the Basement," a **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**-style rescue operation.

**SECRET AGENT**'s distinctive look is beautifully captured in this great DVD transfer from A&E. The series has a wonderfully unique harpsichord score by Edwin Astley, as well as some familiar faces from the Bond films (Vladyslav Shebal, Zena Marshall, both from 1963's **FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE**) and **THE PRISONER** (Anton Rodgers, Jane Merrow, both from "The Schizoid Man"). But don't expect to hear that Johnny Rivers title

tune (except in the paltry DVD extras section), these episodes feature the original **DANGER MAN** titles. One person will probably be pleased about that: John Drake himself. McGoochan reportedly hated the song "Secret Agent Man."

—Tom Soter

**FOOLISH WIVES**  
Image Entertainment  
\$24.95

He struts! He leers! He licks his lips. Erich Von Stroheim is at his lecherous best in the silent film classic **FOOLISH WIVES** (1922), the lavish epic that inspired Universal to bill him on Times Square as \$troheim! The DVD is presented in a full-screen ratio of 1.85:1, with a running time of two hours and 20 minutes. Von Stroheim's original version ran around five hours, but those "ignorant" studio heads cut it down to three and a half, and then to around 90 minutes. This version has been restored from a few different prints to achieve the longer running time, but several key scenes are still missing.

The plot concerns a trio of conniving imposters posing as exiled Russian royalty. They are summering at Monte Carlo with an eye for rich and foolish tourists. Von Stroheim plays the male of the bunch, a lusty lout named Karamzin whose two mistresses pose as his cousins. Observing that a rich American couple is headed to Monte Carlo, Karamzin follows to seduce the wife and get some money, which he intends to use to buy counterfeit currency from a local peasant with a mentally ill daughter (another target for Karamzin's lust). Needless to say, there is much leering and lip licking from Von Stroheim as Karamzin goes about his machinations of seduction. Trouble arises in the form of the maid whom he has promised to marry (presumably he deflowered her somewhere in the cut footage), and who eventually snaps and sets fire to their villa. Karamzin is later killed after deflowering the counterfeiter's daughter, though all this, too, is missing footage.

If you long to check out Von Stroheim at his decadent best, you should definitely pick up **FOOLISH WIVES**, because the whole film is really just a showcase for his florid characterization. However, there are some things any potential DVD buyer should know. For one, the film quality is, overall, horrible: sprocket tears, burns, hairs, lines, holes, water stains, scratches, and discoloration are all on constant parade. The digital transfer is acceptable, but not terrific. Had the film been restored instead of merely reconstructed it might have been a great DVD. Instead, extending the length to more closely match Von Stroheim's original vision seems to be the aim of the archivists, which, unless you're a diehard fan of slow-moving, decomposing silent films, will likely be less rewarding than a shorter but crisper version. Also, I found the tinkling piano soundtrack to be rather

*Continued on page 77*



# Columbia Horrors

in the 1930s

## Part One

by Ken Hanke

**C**olumbia's long status as one of the "little three" (as opposed to the "big five"—Paramount, MGM, RKO, Warner Bros., and Fox) major movie studios of the era, it's surprising how slow Harry Cohn, Columbia Pictures' head, was to follow the lead of its sister studios, especially Universal, by turning its attention to the horror genre. The profits were certainly there to be had and other studios—Paramount in particular—quickly made a name for themselves in that direction. At the time, Columbia had precious little going for it beyond the critically and commercially profitable films of their one bankable director, Frank Capra. The rest of their product was even more readable than Universal's lesser offerings. The mere fact that productions such as *DRACULA* and *MANKENSTEIN* (both 1931) were quite notable above the usual Universal potboilers was a work of Cohn. The fact that they were as

one of the "little three" was a reason, it wasn't until late in 1931 that the studio made its first extremely tentative stab at something like a horror film, with *THE MENACE* (not released until 1932). It was a literary classic—or rather, a stage terror, or a literary classic—like Universal, Columbia was a temporary blood-and-thunder studio. *THE MENACE*, based on the 1927 novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (under which title the film was produced), was only a loose adaptation of the book. Despite the fact that the book is a masterpiece of the genre, the film is stuck very closely to a typical Wallace narrative, which almost everyone is in the mind of. Wallace's narratives usually of some degree of mystery on this point—or at least



an attempt at mystery. In *THE MENACE*, however, the viewer knows from the onset who is who and who did what. The emphasis is on how the hero will prove his innocence and trap the guilty parties. As horror, it's fairly tentative, but it's definitely a thriller and it has elements of the horror genre—almost as if Columbia was testing the waters.

The studio was fortunate in its choice of director: Roy William Neill (today best known for his Sherlock Holmes movies with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce). An agreeable, if somewhat minor, stylist, Neill would become the primary force behind Columbia's stabs at the horror genre during the first wave of horror in the thirties, helming not only this initial effort, but also *THE NINTH GUEST* (1934), *BLACK MOON* (1934), and the studio's best and best-known offering from this era, *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935), along with such nonhorror mysteries as *THE CIRCUS QUEEN MURDER* (1932), *AS THE DEVIL COMMANDS* (1933), and *THE LONE WOLF RETURNS* (1935). The history of horror and mystery at Columbia in the first half of the thirties is virtually the history of Roy William Neill.

A director since 1917, Neill was already on the Columbia payroll and had in fact directed the somewhat horrific Buck Jones Western, *THE AVENGER* (1931), which according to Don Miller in *Hollywood Corral: A Comprehensive B Western Roundup* (Riverwood Press, 1993) boasted a "fascinating, low-key, arty look that enhanced the plot." The write-up further asserts, "Using clever camera angles (by Ted Tetzlaff and Charles Van Enger) and a terse, crisp editing style, Neill packed many elements not usually found in Westerns into the brief hour's running time." In *The Hollywood Western: 90 Years of Cowboys and Indians, Train Robbers, Sheriffs and Gunslingers, and Asorted Heroes and Desperados* (Citadel, 1992), Everson calls *THE AVENGER*, "a grim little film played for tension rather than action" and remarks that it "had superb lighting and camera work from Charles Stumar" (Stumar? Tetzlaff? Van Enger?), suggesting that the picture has much in common with the sort of film Neill would soon specialize in for the studio.

Both Neill's stylishness and his economy are immediately obvious in *THE MENACE*, which opens with hero Ronald Quayle (Walter Byron) being examined by a plastic surgeon after an oil-well fire (thereby making it unnecessary for Walter Byron to look like anyone other than Walter Byron). It's a simple setup and consists of one static shot, but Neill makes it both interesting and mysterious through lighting and composition. The writing itself is little more than expository, with the surgeon assuring Quayle that he handled "much worse cases during the war," and explaining that Quayle's face is less troublesome than his hands, which will require skin grafts over his fingers. "You will never be able to identify yourself again through your fingerprints."

As soon as the operation is completed and Quayle has been turned into Walter Byron of the matinee-idol looks, the film embarks on its real plot. Quayle is a fugitive from British law, having been imprisoned for the murder of his father. Now, with no fingerprints and a new face, he can return to England and get the goods on the real murderers.

The setup is handled with great skill by Neill—and sometimes more than that, such as a remarkable tracking shot following Quayle and his sidekick in tight two-shot out of the doctor's office and through the office-building lobby to a newsstand. However, Neill's direction really comes into its own when the story moves to England and Quayle Manor, which Quayle (posing as Oklahoma oil millionaire Robert Crocket) expresses an interest in buying from his stepmother Caroline (Natalie Moorhead in an enjoyably ripe performance clearly modeled on Lilyan Tashman's femme fatale in 1931's *MURDER BY THE CLOCK*). Those familiar with Neill's later work know his signature use of an almost constantly roving camera and his tendency (not unlike James Whale) to set scenes in front of or on the other side of windows. Quayle Manor and the necessities of the plot (everyone is spying on everyone else) afford Neill almost endless opportunities to indulge both trademarks—and always to good effect.

The moving camera imbues much of the film's action with a sense of menace (is the camera taking on someone's point of view?) that it certainly doesn't have in its plot. The film bristles with incognito characters: Quayle posing as Crocket; his former fiancée, Peggy (Bette Davis), pretending to be a bailiff's assistant; stepmama's boyfriend Lewis (Crauford Kent) playing at being her brother; Scotland Yard detective Carr (Murray Kinnell) palming himself off as yet another bailiff's assistant. The problem is that there's never really any mystery as far as the viewer is concerned—which may not be entirely bad, since it's easy to imagine the accidental humor that might result from unmasking so many characters.

As far as horror is concerned, *THE MENACE* boasts an atmospheric room called "the museum," which figures prominently in the plot and which Neill presents to good effect with shadowy lighting and his ever-prowling camera. "That's the museum—and what a place," explains the bailiff (Charles Gerrard). "Full of mummies—dead bodies, mind you—and 'eathen idols and Lord knows what all." The centerpiece of the museum is a huge and patently unsafe (as the film goes out of its way to assure us) statue of Quetzacoatl, the feathered serpent of the Wallace's original title. "Hey, what's the dope on that thing, anyway?" asks Quayle (obviously for our benefit, since he already knows) in the exaggerated Americanese he adopts (along with much gum chewing) to convince the largely non-British cast of Britishers that he's not British. "It's an 'eathen idol, sir. The Aztec god of vengeance. They tells me there's many a poor blighter of an Aztec that's lost his eye or his tongue because the feathered serpent said so. Kinda gives me the creeps, it does," reveals the bailiff. Not surprisingly, the statue (whose vengeance persona Quayle takes on to prove that stepmom and her friends ushered his father into an early grave) figures prominently in the film's climax.

*THE MENACE* is mostly remembered today as the film during which Murray Kinnell met Bette Davis and brought the young actress to the attention of his good friend George Arliss, who cast her as the romantic lead in *THE MAN WHO PLAYED GOD* (1932), giving Davis her first substantial chance to act in a prestigious movie. Pity, since



In 1933, Depression-weary moviegoers spent a delightful *NIGHT OF TERROR* with Wallace Ford, Bela Lugosi, and Sally Blane.





ABOVE: Dorothy Burgess is the wife with the power of voodoo in *BLACK MOON* (1933). RIGHT: Gail (Fay Wray) and Nancy (Cora Sue Collins) regard Ruva (Madame Sul-Te-Wan), the voodoo mistress with plans for Nancy's mom. PAGE 37: Jack Holt, Fay Wray, and an unidentified actor get into the spirit of things in the thriller *BLACK MOON*.



the film is undeniably fun (especially in the ham-handed perfidy of its villains) and atmospheric, and is an interesting point of development in Columbia's horror films. Despite its status as more thriller than chiller, *THE MENACE* clearly leans toward horror with its strange museum, the singularly gruesome handling of a murdered body (and the spectacular and slightly gory revelation of its presence in a mummy case), and the vaguely mystical notion of the serpent exacting vengeance on the killer by falling on him. A case can also be made that the inclusion of Charles Gerrard in a role seemingly drawn from his turn as Martin in *DRACULA*—he even says, "She's barmy! They're all barmy!"—is drawn from the genre, though why anyone stealing from *DRACULA* would steal the comic relief is beyond human comprehension.

Better known (largely owing to the presence of Boris Karloff in a supporting role) is Columbia's second attempt at the genre, the truly strange *BEHIND THE MASK* (1932) directed by John Francis Dillon from a screenplay by Jo Swerling, who was also turning out all the scripts for Frank Capra's films at the time. Though almost forgotten today, director John Francis Dillon was a fairly important figure in silents and one of the more talented pioneers in early sound film, and was probably assigned this movie based on his handling of the gangster thriller, *THE FINGER POINTS* (1931). Indeed, it appears that the strange gangster/horror hybrid that is *BEHIND THE MASK* started life without its horrific elements, which were added in the wake of the success of *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931). There can be little other explanation for Karloff's absurdly high billing in a minor role, nor for the ultrasadistic mad-scientist villainy of Edward Van Sloan (a veteran, of course, of *DRACULA* and *FRANKENSTEIN*), nor the pointless inclusion of some electrical gadgetry. In any case, the resulting film, while not exactly good, is a lot of fun owing to its very peculiarity.

Popular Columbia star Jack Holt plays Secret Service agent Jack Hart (apparently we're supposed to think Holt really is everything we see on the screen), who is out to smash a narcotics ring. In one of those typically convoluted plans best left to the movies, Hart has been put in prison to gain the confidence of one of the gang, Henderson (Karloff), in order to gain admittance to their inner

circle on "breaking out" of jail. (Edmond O'Brien pulled the same ruse in the considerably better known 1949 film noir *WHITE HEAT*.) So stalwart and so dedicated is Hart that he decides to lend credence to his jailbreak by shooting himself in the arm. ("We're on narcotics—maybe they could use a shot in the arm.") This is one butch hero. The plan works—up to a point. Hart does get into the gang, but this gets him no nearer the head of the operation, the mysterious Mr. X—though it isn't long before Mr. X knows full well that he has a traitor in his organization, putting Hart very much on the spot.

The mystery element might have worked in 1932, but horror fans are by now far too familiar with Edward Van Sloan not to recognize that the civic-minded crusader, Dr. Alec Munsell, the sinister Dr. August Steiner, and Mr. X are all Van Sloan. It hardly matters. It's still one of Van Sloan's finest performances and the best shot he ever had at over-the-top villainy. Despite his relatively low billing (not only under Holt and leading lady Constance Cummings, but beneath Karloff, Claude King, and Bertha Mann), Van Sloan is really the best thing about the film. As Steiner, he has several delightfully perfidious moments—usually threatening Karloff (who is saddled with such memorably unKarloffian lines as, "That's all right, baby, the Doc expects me!")—but he truly comes into his own in the film's climactic scene. After Hart discovers that the narcotics are hidden in phony graves, Steiner kidnaps our hero and cheerfully straps him to an operating table.

*Hart:* I advise you to untie my hands and let me down off this table.

*Steiner:* I know it is customary to get the consent of a patient before an operation, but this was an emergency and I was compelled to use my own judgment.

*Hart:* I'll guarantee this—no matter what happens to me, this butcher shop won't be here tomorrow.

*Steiner:* Neither will you! But I'm surprised, my friend, that you should question the regularity of this institution. It is my own private hospital and I always insist that everything be done within the requirements of the law. Here is your admittance card. This card, by the way, was made out several days



ago. You see, Mr. Hart, we were expecting you. I'm going to test your heart action to see if it is advisable to give you an anesthetic. Some people cannot stand ether. They die under the operation, and I wouldn't want that to happen to you. Your heart shows a distinct flutter.

Hart: You're a liar.

Steiner: I'm afraid I better not give you ether. I might try a local anesthetic—a little morphine perhaps?

Hart's absurd stoicism and downright stupid baiting of his adversary (who in his right mind goes out of his way to anger a man with a knife?) plays neatly off the polished theatricality of Steiner. (One wishes that Jo Swerling had written other such films, even if Swerling obviously had a strange take on what constitutes a local anesthetic.)

Steiner is so blessed with the gift of villainous verbosity that he just has to keep going. "Has it ever occurred to you, Mr. Hart, that you can commit almost any crime if you select the proper environment? For example, if I were to stick a knife into you in the street, it would attract attention. I might have to answer embarrassing questions, but when I stick a knife into you here, on the operating table, nothing will happen to me." Not content to have already driven his assailant to these extremes, Hart continues, too, noting, "If my hands were untied, I'd applaud." "But your hands are tied," reminds Steiner—neatly foreshadowing **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE** by 30 years!

Swerling's script saves Steiner's most outrageous philosophical pontifications for last. "In a way, Mr. Hart, you are very fortunate. Few people are able to see an operation performed upon them, but you will be able to see every detail. It will be too bad, of course, that you will not be able to talk about it afterwards. The pain when I am going through the layers of skin will not be unendurable. It is only when I begin to cut on the inside that you will realize you are having an experience! Wasn't it Nietzsche who said that unendurable pain merges into ecstasy? We shall find out if that was an epigram or a fact! For my part, I know it will be ecstasy!"

Juicy dialogue, indeed, but it's the manner in which Van Sloan handles the lines that really put them across. That said, it would be unfair to shortchange Dillon's direction. The sequence is shot in a moody fashion, with odd camera angles and a true sense of the unwholesome. The dialogue is delightfully purple in its pre-Code gruesomeness (as is the entire drug-related plot) and would never have passed the censors a mere two years later. We don't actually see anything, but for sheer twisted sadism, the impending vivisection of Jack Hart outdistances anything in even the Tod Browning canon.

Karloff fans may have felt more than slightly let down by **BEHIND THE MASK** (Columbia would more than make up for that in a few years), but Bela Lugosi's adherents had much less cause for complaint with the starring vehicle the studio cooked up for him as their next—and most undiluted thus far—foray into the horror genre, **NIGHT OF TERROR** (1933). Often dismissed as one of Lugosi's "red herring" vehicles (which isn't exactly true, since Lugosi's character is actually the film's hero), this is a surprisingly nasty and wonderfully atmospheric Old Dark House affair, with Lugosi heading up an unusually strong cast. It may also be the movies' first

ever "body count" picture, prefiguring such efforts as the **FRIDAY THE 13TH** series—and it gives even those a run for their money in terms of corpse quantity!

The film's roots are clearly in **THE CAT AND THE CANARY** (making the participation of Tully Marshall—Lawyer Crosby in Paul Leni's 1927 version of **CAT**—in the cast a nice touch). Writer (and sometimes director and actor) Willard Mack came up with a story that took the "femme inspiration" one step further. Where **THE CAT AND THE CANARY** used the concept of a crazed killer known as The Cat as part of cock-and-maniac story to disguise the identity of the real (and comparatively rational) killer, Mack adds a very real, crazed killer (in addition to the mystery killer) to the mix—The Maniac (billed as played by Edwin Maxwell, who only appears in the movie's tag scene, while an uncredited Pat Harmon assays the role for most of the film). The Maniac may very well be the screen's first serial killer—and a showy one he is, at that, killing only after sundown and always leaving newspaper clippings of his previous adventures on his victims' bodies! He is also decidedly unsavory, being ill-kempt, warty, unshaven, and in need of extensive dental work. (One wonders, in fact, just how he goes unnoticed in the world at large.) Screenwriters William Jacobs and Beatrice Van took Mack's story and crafted a good and grisly thriller that journeyman director Ben Stoloff (no doubt with a big assist





from cinematographer Joseph Valentine) brought in with just the right sense of atmosphere and melodrama.

NIGHT OF TERROR departs from Columbia's previous efforts in several significant ways. First of all, there's no question about it—this is a horror movie in the grand tradition, one that even throws in a dollop of very effective mysticism, including one of the best séance scenes (combined with the traditional, "The name of the murderer is . . ." bit) ever committed to film. Moreover, though obviously made inexpensively, much more care has been lavished on the production. Unlike its predecessors, it boasts an effective (if undistinguished) musical score. And it is every inch a personality vehicle for Lugosi—an established horror star.

Lugosi, playing Degar, a turbaned Hindu butler, may not be the villain of the piece, but much as would be the case in many of his later Monogram films, the part is built entirely on his screen persona, calling on him to do things that can only be justified on that basis. From the moment he's introduced (via a tracking shot into a close-up of his face seen through a door panel), it's obviously the Lugosi presence being featured here, even if old Professor Richard Rinehart (Tully Marshall) isn't in on the idea. "Degar! How is it that every time I turn around, I find you snooping about?" complains the old gent. "Pardon, master, I've come to warn you. There's cause for alarm! The evening paper states that the Maniac has committed murder again! This time close to this very house!" reveals Degar, setting the tone for the rich, slightly mocking melodrama that infuses both Lugosi's performance and the film in general.

The film also trades on the newly established concept of replacing the usual somewhat bland romantic lead with a hyperkinetic, wisecracking newspaper reporter, established the previous year in DOCTOR X. If Wallace Ford (in his first of three such roles opposite Lugosi) isn't quite on a par with DOCTOR X's Lee Tracy, he's not far from it. NIGHT OF TERROR is a cheerful combination of all manner of horror/thriller conventions. It takes itself seriously enough to work as a horror film, but not so seriously as to make itself absurd—something that would be quite easy to do, given certain aspects of its mystery plot, which come apart like a \$1.95 suit on even slight examination.

It's not plot or mystery elements that make NIGHT OF TERROR one of the most enjoyable Columbia offerings from the era. It's the combination of Lugosi, the set pieces, the pre-Code ambience, and the film's throwaway touches—not to mention its almost delirious pace, which is established right from the onset. No sooner are the film's evocative credits over than we see the Maniac at work, peering out of the shrubbery and doing away with a courting couple (an unbilled Dave O'Brien plays the man) in a parked car. The film continues with a cleverly constructed series of scenes demonstrating that the Maniac is the talk of the town, cutting from scene to scene with various people having the same conversation (e.g., a woman in one scene asks, "How many has he killed so far?" and the film cuts to another scene with someone answering, "Twelve! No one's safe"). Next it transports us to the central setting of the Rinehart (can this reference to the Grand Dame of the Old House mystery be accidental?) Estate, where the film settles into a more traditional, but no less enjoyable, form of exposition.

NIGHT OF TERROR scores on little points of often dark good humor. No sooner has the Maniac dispatched the gravedigging gardener than Arthur Hornsby (George Meeker) remarks to his uncle, "You see? He's finished"—unconscious of the double meaning. And how seriously is the viewer supposed to take the Maniac? The fellow is forever peeping out of shrubbery and blinking, is fairly easily frightened off, and seems to specialize in killing off bit players, making his homicidal antics appalling without ever being especially involving. (Again, this makes him the logical—if more theatrically fun—predecessor to the likes of Jason and Michael Myers.) Certainly, plotwise, he's as much

of a red herring as not, and he's ultimately used for the film's delightful curtain speech warning to the audience.

As mentioned, the highlight of the film is undeniably its séance. While much of the film is at least marginally tongue-in-cheek, the séance, while a grand piece of theatrical melodrama, is clearly meant to be taken seriously. Placed late in the film, the sequence is nicely showcased. Its value to the plot lies in getting Degar arrested for the murder of his wife, Sika (Mary Frey), on some pretty flimsy evidence. (That hardly bothers Matt McHugh as perhaps the ne plus ultra in loudmouthed dumb cops.) Lugosi and Frey play the scene with an almost alarming intensity. "I see the face of the murderer . . . it isn't plain . . . I can't make it out," Sika moans. "Stop! Do you hear me! Stop!" cautions a blazing-eyed Degar. "The spirit will not be denied! Now, I see the face . . . it's very plain . . . it's . . ." continues Sika to her inevitable skewering. The approach is deceptively simple—one striking, high-angle shot that beautifully conveys the look of people in a darkened room illuminated by moonlight, plus a series of atmospheric close shots—yet it works splendidly, not least because it's taken so completely almost matter-of-factly, seriously. Even better is Lugosi's amazing shift from anger (or fear) to the tenderness with which he caresses his dead wife's face.

The séance leads to the film's mildly notorious (and sometimes censored) scene involving Degar drugging a cop ("It is an Oriental . . . cigarette"), which paves the way for the movie's satisfying, if far from believable, conclusion. The solution to the mystery—much like the whole concept of the Maniac—may well have been intended to poke at the absurdities of the Old House subgenre. Certainly, NIGHT OF TERROR leaves no Old House convention unturned and takes most of them a step further than ever before, which suggests that its absurdities are deliberate. Whether they are or not, the film itself deserves more attention than it has received. And I do hope that the Maniac takes note that, even at this late date, I am not risking his wrath by daring to tell anyone "how this picture ends."

Columbia's next offering boasts no horror stars (though our old character actor friends, Samuel S. Hinds and Edwin Maxwell, are on hand), but returns Roy William Neill to the director's chair for THE NINTH GUEST (1934), one of the most clever of all the Columbias—and, historically, one of the most interesting for what it spawned. Based (fairly closely) on a long forgotten 1930 novel *Unholy Host*, by Gwen Bristow and Bruce Manning, THE NINTH GUEST is an unsung delight for genre fans.

From its stylish opening to its (literally) electrifying climax, THE NINTH GUEST keeps surprising the viewer with its parade of stylistic flourishes. It is probably the most elaborately styled film in Neill's filmography. There's a sense that every shot in the film has been carefully thought through. Nothing seems perfunctory. Every angle, every framing is deliberately chosen to be as visually interesting as possible. Whether or not this enhances the story is open to question. It could be considered nothing more than flashiness for its own sake, but it's the deliberate manner in which Neill opts to tell the story—with style on even footing with plot. THE NINTH GUEST is an Art Deco thriller done in a manner that captures the very essence of its design.

The storyline is shockingly familiar. Eight people receive an identical telegram: "Congratulations. Stop. Plans afoot for small party your honor. Manville Penthouse next Saturday 10 p.m. Stop. Maintain secrecy. Stop. Promise you the most original party ever slate. Signed, Your Host." Of course, all eight people are somehow connected and most of them have a grudge of some kind against one or more of the others. Newspaper reporter Jim Daley (Donald Cook) and socialite Jean Trent (Genevieve Tobin) are estranged lovers. Henry Abbot (Hardie Abright) is a young man who has been bounced from a university by Dr. Murray Reid (Samuel S. Hinds) over his attacks on university





**LEFT:** A mysterious radio voice threatens four frightened people (played by Donald Cook, Hardie Albright, Helen Flint, and Edward Ellis in *THE NINTH GUEST* (1934). Is it the Voice of Death? The voice of Charlie McCarthy? Only *The Shadow* knows, and he isn't in the movie! **RIGHT:** "The evening paper states that the Maniac has committed murder again! This time close to this very house!" Four more frightened people (played by George Meeker, Sally Blane, Bela Lugosi, and Tully Marshall) have let themselves in for a *NIGHT OF TERROR*.

patron and political bigwig Jason Osgood (Edwin Maxwell). Osgood is at odds with powerful politico Tim Cronin (Edward Ellis), who, with the help of lawyer lady friend Sylvia Inglesby (Helen Flint), has ruined Osgood's mayoral candidate. Cronin himself is at loggerheads with leading socialite Margaret Chisholm (Nella Walker) because she snubbed his daughter. In other words, it's the perfect mix for a lively dinner party!

Of course, it turns out to be something more than a dinner party, as the assembled revelers soon find out. After accusing each other of setting up this practical joke, the partygoers try to leave, only to find themselves addressed by a voice coming from the radio. "Wait! Don't anyone leave! This is station WITS broadcasting. I trust you have enjoyed the first part of the evening's entertainment. You are now listening to the voice of your host. Ladies and gentlemen, you were promised the most original party ever given in this city. Tonight, my friends, we shall play an amusing game in which all of you will have ample opportunity to use your brain. I warn you, however, the stakes will be high for tonight you are commanded to play an absorb-

ing game. You have been chosen with care—for only men and women of your exceptional intellectual ability will be worthy opponents. Until dawn we will play an absorbing game of wit—yours against mine. I warn you, this is not a joke. This is the voice of one you know well, one who has planned revenge because of deadly wrong. Give attention to the rules and try to win. You will notice the telephone connections have been cut. To touch the radio means death—it's charged with enough electricity to kill you instantly. There is no escape—the gates by which you entered the garden are also charged with electricity."

The Invisible Host's plan is that they will all "meet my guest of honor, the ninth guest—his name is death." If this sounds familiar, that's because it's the uncredited source for the latter half of the better-known Karloff "Mad Doctor" vehicle, *THE MAN THEY COULD NOT HANG* (1939), and is suspiciously similar to Agatha Christie's novel *Ten Little Indians* (1939), the basis for the film *AND THEN THERE WERE NONE* (1945).

Much like *AND THEN THERE WERE NONE*, the revenge scheme plays on a secret of each of the assembled guests.

**LEFT:** See what happens when you hang around the wrong places? Degar (Bela Lugosi) accuses an innocent skeleton with nothing to hide of cold-blooded (well, no-blooded) murder in *NIGHT OF TERROR*. **RIGHT:** Little do gangland figures Arnold (Claude King) and Henderson (Boris Karloff) know that Arnold's chauffeur and supposed fellow criminal is—*BEHIND THE MASK* (1932)—undercover agent Jack Hart (Jack Holt).







TOP: Anton Berghman (Boris Karloff) pays court to Thea Hassel (Marian Marsh)—or is it really evil brother Gregor? Colonel Hassel (Thurston Hall) is suspicious of Anton/Gregor and what might have transpired in *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935). MIDDLE: Mashka (Katherine DeMille) begs Gregor not to forsake her, but when pushka comes to shovka, it's Bye Bye Mashka! BOTTOM: Even away from Universal, Karloff had trouble with angry villagers.

"Every one of you has some secret that you hide from the world," the voice tells them. "Through these weaknesses, I will attack you." For the most part, this approach serves the film well, as the host causes several characters to bring about their own ends. Unfortunately, as their number dwindles, this idea becomes ever harder to incorporate, though never to a degree that it badly damages the effectiveness of the plot—at least for most of the film's length. The solution to the identity of the killer (one of the guests, naturally) does become abundantly obvious a few minutes before the end, thanks to that cardinal rule of mystery stories that personable young men in love with heroines who do not love them back are invariably crazed killers. This ultimately robs the film of its mystery, but in no way diminishes its entertainment value or the sheer cleverness of the approach.

What is perhaps most interesting about *THE NINTH GUEST* is the manner in which it takes a traditional Old Dark House thriller and transfers it to a glittering Art Deco penthouse—much in the same way that Edgar G. Ulmer's *THE BLACK CAT*, made the same year, replaces the Gothic trappings of the horror film with the Bauhaus-influenced décor of Hjalmar Poelzig's modern home. Neill integrates the film's striking production design into the film that he occasionally makes his camera an actual part of the setting, as when he photographs the terrified guests from inside the radio over which the voice of their host is speaking. The film has the presence of mind to employ a variety of the standard chills, as when it allows for a scene in which the guests find eight coffins waiting for them. The results are a nearly perfect blend of old and new (though, of course, by now an Art Deco penthouse is, in itself, old).

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TOP: Anton Berghman (Boris Karloff) pays court to Thea Hassel (Marian Marsh)—or is it really evil brother Gregor? Colonel Hassel (Thurston Hall) is suspicious of Anton/Gregor and what might have transpired in *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935). MIDDLE: Mashka (Katherine DeMille) begs Gregor not to forsake her, but when pushka comes to shovka, it's Bye Bye Mashka! BOTTOM: Even away from Universal, Karloff had trouble with angry villagers.

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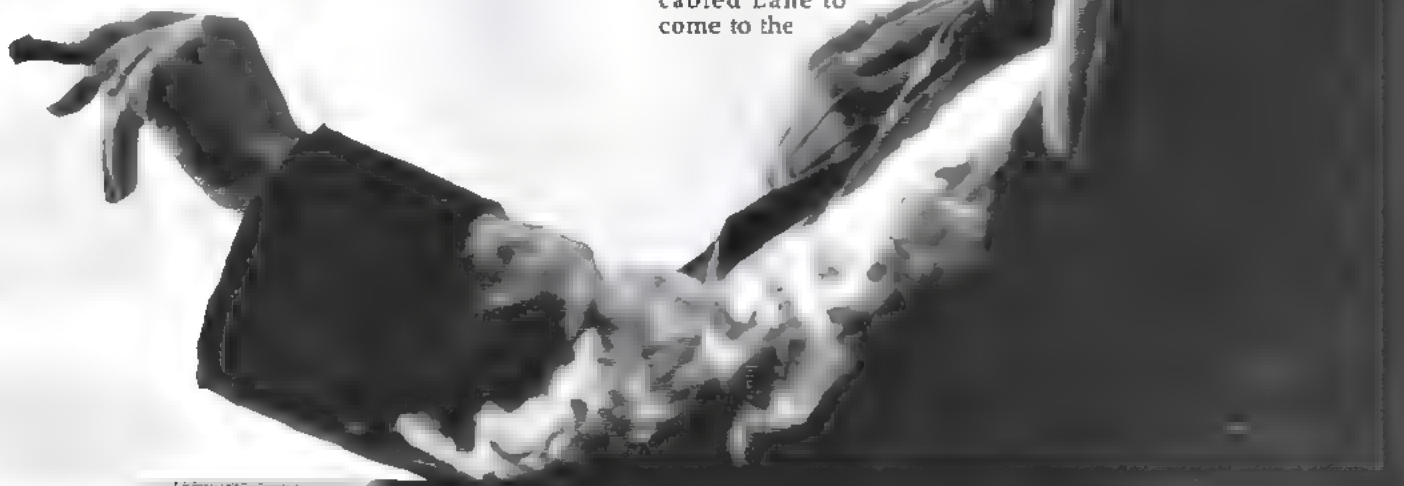
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What nobody realizes, until the natives are about to storm the plantation house, is that the high priest isn't dead. Lunch rushes in to warn them. "They killed my gal right after we left. I just talked to her mother and that priest ain't dead." At this moment the natives arrive bent on revenge. "Mr. Lane, you got your gun?" asks Lunch, as they rush the gates. "Now is the time!" he advises. Locking themselves and Gail and Nancy in the tower room, they hold off the attack until the natives, led by Juanita, smoke them out. Capturing everyone but Perez, Juanita reveals her plan—"I'll own San Christopher when my uncle dies, which will be when we find him." She further explains that both Stephen and Gail are to be sacrificed, but Perez helps them escape, leaving Juanita in the position of being forced to sacrifice her own daughter.

The climactic sequence, though harmed by the day-for-night shooting and a perfunctory resolution, is not without merit. Dorothy Burgess, who has been exceptionally good throughout the film, truly shines in these final moments when Juanita is put into the unthinkable position of sacrificing Nancy. Child star Cora Sue Collins portrays Nancy's uncomprehending terror very nearly as well. Unfortunately, these performances are housed in the film's most disappointing sequence—a significant drawback when it's the film's Big Ending!

Despite its structural flaws and racial stereotyping, *BLACK MOON* is an interesting precursor to *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*. It's also Hollywood's first serious attempt to tackle the subject of voodoo.

PAGE 42 Gangster Slick Rawley (Ralph Bellamy) menaces the lovely heroine, Janet Hayden (Marian Marsh), in Columbia's *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE*. RIGHT Another rare photograph of Bellamy's "scarface" makeup.

*WHITE ZOMBIE* (1932), while a better horror film, was far more fanciful and never delved very deeply into the reality of the topic. *BLACK MOON* makes voodoo out to be somewhat more menacing than it is, but it's still a relatively sober approach to the topic—an approach that may be as damaging as it is interesting, since it robs the film of much of the creepiness found in less realistic voodoo epics.

No such flaws are to be found in the studio's next horror offering—and Roy William Neill's last such film for Columbia, *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935) is one of the great horror films, as well as one of the best vehicles Boris Karloff ever had. Neill's direction may not be as splendidly adventurous in *THE BLACK ROOM* as it had been on *THE NINTH GUEST* and *BLACK MOON*, but it is every bit as assured, and the material he was working with was streets ahead of anything he had previously done in the genre. The tendency for Neill's genre work to owe a certain stylistic debt to James Whale is truly in evidence here. Neill's horror films may lack a degree of Whale's theatricality and underlying subtext, but *THE BLACK ROOM* is nonetheless stylish, effective, entertaining filmmaking. It's the closest Neill ever got to making a movie in the same league as Whale.

*THE BLACK ROOM* also benefits from being the only one of the early Columbia Horrors to boast a distinctive musical score. Most either had no incidental music (*THE MENACE*, *BEHIND THE MASK*, *THE NINTH GUEST*) or were apparently scored from library tracks (*NIGHT OF TERROR*, *BLACK MOON*). *THE BLACK ROOM* is the happy exception, boasting a fine score which, according to composer/arranger/film music expert John Morgan, was primarily the work of Milan Roder (one of Erich Wolfgang Korngold's principal orchestrators), R. H. Bassett, and musical director Louis Silvers. The film's memorable main theme (which mysteriously ended up as library music, eventually finding its way to a somewhat inglorious home in the 1941 Lugosi vehicle, *SPOOKS RUN WILD*) is apparently the work of Roder and it lends the film much of its distinction.

This is also far and away the most sumptuous of all the early Columbias. Though it almost certainly made use of standing sets, the mere fact that it was a period piece made it immediately more elaborate and costly than its companions. The production design by Stephen Goosson is flawless throughout. The highly stylized graveyard set, in which several key scenes take place, is sufficiently striking as to look like something out of an actual Whale picture. Not surprisingly, Neill makes the most of these settings.

Better constructed than the other Columbia offerings, *THE BLACK ROOM* begins with a prologue that sets up its central situation. Villagers are gathered to be in on the birth of a child to Baron de Berghman (Henry Kolker), but when the doctor (played by a bewhiskered, unbleached Edward Van Sloan) announces that the Baron is the father of twins, the patriarch's anxious joy turns to fear and sorrow. "Don't toast this birth," he tells his friends. "Do you all know how our family began? With twins—Brand and Wolfram. And it will end with twins. Brand, the younger, murdered his brother. This house began with murder. It will end the same way."

To prove his point—or at least add some weight to the legend—the Baron has Lieutenant Hassel (Colin Tapley) read from the family history. "And after that night, Wolfram was never seen again, neither within the castle, nor without. And all men knew that he had been slain by his younger brother in the Black Room." Hassel argues that, since the babies are twins, there is no older and younger, but the doctor corrects this notion, and adds that the younger in this case will have more cause for bitterness than losing out on the title and the estate, since he was born

with a paralyzed right arm. Hassel, however, has an inspiration: "May I offer a simple suggestion? You believe that the younger will kill the older in the Black Room. Then the solution is simple—seal it up. There won't be any Black Room." The question as to whether or not a prophecy can be so easily thwarted never enters anyone's mind, and the process is under taken.

As the years pass, the younger brother, Anton (Karloff), leaves the area to strike out on his own, while Gregor (also Karloff, of course) assumes the role of Baron, becoming a thoroughly debauched monster of such utter depravity that the script can only hint at his many crimes. When the boys become too hot even for a nobleman such as the Baron, he asks his kid brother to return to help run the estates. Anton ("He looks just like the Baron") is not originally greeted with any great enthusiasm by the locals, who only view him as another De Berghman that they don't want or need. Anton himself is not all that pleased, remembering what it was like before he left. "Every time I looked at Gregor—my own brother—he seemed to expect me to kill him," he tells (now) Colonel Hassel (Thurston Hall).

The ease with which Karloff crafts his portrayals of the two very different brothers is astonishing. The only physical difference afforded the actor lies in the characters' grooming habits. Anton is impeccably dressed and his hair always perfectly in place, while Gregor is well something of a slob, with a wild shock of hair that seems to have but the vaguest familiarity with a comb. Yet one never questions that these are very different people. Some of Karloff's tricks are fairly obvious—Gregor doesn't so much sit as he pours himself into a chair—but effective all the same. The greater degree of the difference, however, is much subtler. Anton has a precise look to him. He's bright and attentive. His face suggests kindly intelligence and interest. Gregor, on the other hand, has a slightly more slack countenance, suggesting dissipation—his lower lip tends to hang down and there's a distinctly unkind look about him. Gregor's facial features suggest craftiness rather than intelligence and cruelty to the point of sadism. Remarkably, Karloff pulls this off without recourse to makeup. It's all in the acting, and it may well be his finest performance.

No sooner does Anton arrive than he finds evidence of what has transpired in his absence. On his way to the castle, someone takes a shot at him, thinking he's Gregor. After his first meeting with his elder brother, he finds himself facing down a trio of assassins. He bests one. Another is tackled by his dog, Tor. It is at this moment that the audience knows—and Anton should, though he chooses not to believe what he sees—that Gregor's utter cruelty is probably worse than what even his most virulent detractors suspect. "Don't stop him!" he tells Anton, when he tries to pull the dog off the man. "Kill him, Tor." Anton pays no heed and questions the man about his actions. "Ask him





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the next night to the voodoo ceremony, arriving just in time to shoot the high priest (supposedly killing him) before he can offer up a human sacrifice. The gesture goes for naught, however, since no sooner do Lane and Lunch beat a hasty retreat than the hapless sacrifice finds herself done in by a subordinate. "You killed him?" asks Perez when they tell their story. "Knocked him cold," Lunch interjects. "You've done the one thing that will save our lives," Perez tells Lane. "It's just like I told you—they monkey chasers can't fight without no priest," explains Lunch. "Quite right," Perez agrees. "If the priest dies, they believe the gods are angry. There's no more danger with the priest dead."

Now that Lane has actually seen his wife involved in the voodoo ceremony, Perez explains her background—how her parents were killed by the natives and how Ruva secretly took her to the sacrifices and indoctrinated her into the voodoo religion, until Perez found out and sent her away to school in America. He had thought she was "cured" of her adherence to the practice, but obviously the tie was stronger than he had realized.

What nobody realizes, until the natives are about to storm the plantation house, is that the high priest isn't dead. Lunch rushes in to warn them. "They killed my gal right after we left. I just talked to her mother and that priest ain't dead." At this moment, the natives arrive bent on revenge. "Mr. Lane, you got your gun?" asks Lunch, as they rush the gates. "Now is the time!" he advises. Locking themselves and Gail and Nancy in the tower room, they hold off the attack until the natives, led by Juanita, smoke them out. Capturing everyone but Perez, Juanita reveals her plan—"I'll own San Christopher when my uncle dies, which will be when we find him." She further explains that both Stephen and Gail are to be sacrificed, but Perez helps them escape, leaving Juanita in the position of being forced to sacrifice her own daughter.

The climactic sequence, though harmed by the day-for-night shooting and a perfunctory resolution, is not without merit. Dorothy Burgess, who has been exceptionally good throughout the film, truly shines in these final moments when Juanita is put into the unthinkable position of sacrificing Nancy. Child star Cora Sue Collins portrays Nancy's uncomprehending terror very nearly as well. Unfortunately, these performances are housed in the film's most disappointing sequence—a significant drawback when it's the film's Big Ending!

Despite its structural flaws and racial stereotyping, *BLACK MOON* is an interesting precursor to *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*. It's also Hollywood's first serious attempt to tackle the subject of voodoo.





**PAGE 42:** Gangster Slick Rawley (Ralph Bellamy) menaces the lovely heroine, Janet Haydon (Marian Marsh), in Columbia's *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE*. **RIGHT:** Another rare photograph of Bellamy's "scarface" makeup.

*WHITE ZOMBIE* (1932), while a better horror film, was far more fanciful and never delved very deeply into the reality of the topic. *BLACK MOON* makes voodoo out to be somewhat more menacing than it is, but it's still a relatively sober approach to the topic—an approach that may be as damaging as it is interesting, since it robs the film of much of the creepiness found in less realistic voodoo epics.

No such flaws are to be found in the studio's next horror offering—and Roy William Neill's last such film for Columbia. *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935) is one of the great horror films, as well as one of the best vehicles Boris Karloff ever had. Neill's direction may not be as splendidly adventurous in *THE BLACK ROOM* as it had been on *THE NINTH GUEST* and *BLACK MOON*, but it is every bit as assured, and the material he was working with was streets ahead of anything he had previously done in the genre. The tendency for Neill's genre work to owe a certain stylistic debt to James Whale is truly in evidence here. Neill's horror films may lack a degree of Whale's theatricality and underlying subtext, but *THE BLACK ROOM* is nonetheless stylish, effective, entertaining filmmaking. It's the closest Neill ever got to making a movie in the same league as Whale.

*THE BLACK ROOM* also benefits from being the only one of the early Columbia Horrors to boast a distinctive musical score. Most either had no incidental music (*THE MENACE*, *BEHIND THE MASK*, *THE NINTH GUEST*) or were apparently scored from library tracks (*NIGHT OF TERROR*, *BLACK MOON*). *THE BLACK ROOM* is the happy exception, boasting a fine score which, according to composer/arranger/film music-expert John Morgan, was primarily the work of Milan Roder (one of Erich Wolfgang Korngold's principal orchestrators), R. H. Bassett, and musical director Louis Silvers. The film's memorable main theme (which mysteriously ended up as library music, eventually finding its way to a somewhat inglorious home in the 1941 Lugosi vehicle, *SPOOKS RUN WILD*) is apparently the work of Roder, and it lends the film much of its distinction.

This is also far and away the most sumptuous of all the early Columbias. Though it almost certainly made use of standing sets, the mere fact that it was a period piece made it immediately more elaborate and costly than its companions. The production design by Stephen Goosson is flawless throughout. The highly stylized graveyard set, in which several key scenes take place, is sufficiently striking as to look like something out of an actual Whale picture. Not surprisingly, Neill makes the most of these settings.

Better constructed than the other Columbia offerings, *THE BLACK ROOM* begins with a prologue that sets up its central situation. Villagers are gathered to be in on the birth of a child to Baron de Berghman (Henry Kolker), but when the doctor (played by a bewhiskered, unbilled Edward Van Sloan) announces that the Baron is the father of twins, the patriarch's anxious joy turns to fear and sorrow. "Don't toast this birth," he tells his friends. "Do you all know how our family began? With twins—Brand and Wolfram. And it will end with twins. Brand, the younger, murdered his brother. This house began with murder. It will end the same way."

To prove his point—or at least add some weight to the legend—the Baron has Lieutenant Hassel (Colin Tapley) read from the family history. "And after that night, Wolfram was never seen again, neither within the castle, nor without. And all men knew that he had been slain by his younger brother in the Black Room." Hassel argues that, since the babies are twins, there is no older and younger, but the doctor corrects this notion, and adds that the younger in this case will have more cause for bitterness than losing out on the title and the estate, since he was born

with a paralyzed right arm. Hassel, however, has an inspiration: "May I offer a simple suggestion? You believe that the younger will kill the older in the Black Room. Then the solution is simple—seal it up. There won't be any Black Room." The question as to whether or not a prophecy can be so easily thwarted never enters anyone's mind, and the process is undertaken.

As the years pass, the younger brother, Anton (Karloff), leaves the area to strike out on his own, while Gregor (also Karloff, of course) assumes the role of Baron, becoming a thoroughly debauched monster of such utter depravity that the script can only hint at his many crimes. When things become too hot even for a nobleman such as the Baron, he asks his kid brother to return to help run the estates. Anton ("He looks just like the Baron") is not originally greeted with any great enthusiasm by the locals, who only view him as another De Berghman that they don't want or need. Anton himself is not all that pleased, remembering what it was like before he left. "Every time I looked at Gregor—my own brother—he seemed to expect me to kill him," he tells (now) Colonel Hassel (Thurston Hall).

The ease with which Karloff crafts his portrayals of the two very different brothers is astonishing. The only physical difference afforded the actor lies in the characters' grooming habits. Anton is impeccably dressed and his hair always perfectly in place, while Gregor is . . . well, something of a slob, with a wild shock of hair that seems to have but the vaguest familiarity with a comb. Yet one never questions that these are very different people. Some of Karloff's tricks are fairly obvious—Gregor doesn't so much sit as he pours himself into a chair—but effective all the same. The greater degree of the difference, however, is much subtler. Anton has a precise look to him. He's bright and attentive. His face suggests kindly intelligence and interest. Gregor, on the other hand, has a slightly more slack countenance, suggesting dissipation—his lower lip tends to hang down and there's a distinctly unkind look about him. Gregor's facial features suggest craftiness rather than intelligence and cruelty to the point of sadism. Remarkably, Karloff pulls this off without recourse to makeup. It's all in the acting, and it may well be his finest performance.

No sooner does Anton arrive than he finds evidence of what has transpired in his absence. On his way to the castle, someone takes a shot at him, thinking he's Gregor. After his first meeting with his elder brother, he finds himself facing down a trio of assassins. He bests one. Another is tackled by his dog, Tor. It is at this moment that the audience knows—and Anton should, though he chooses not to believe what he sees—that Gregor's utter cruelty is probably worse than what even his most virulent detractors suspect. "Don't stop him!" he tells Anton, when he tries to pull the dog off the man. "Kill him, Tor." Anton pays no heed and questions the man about his actions. "Ask him





what became of my sister and the other women. Ask him what became of them. Why are they never seen again?" the man replies. Gregor, of course, will have none of it and has the man taken away.

That night, at a dinner party at Colonel Hassel's, Gregor's unbridled lechery oozes in the direction of Hassel's niece, Thea (Marian Marsh). Later, Gregor finds himself saddled with the demands of previous girlfriend Mashka (Katherine DeMille), who is insanely jealous and more than a little put out by Gregor's desire to make Thea his baroness. In a splendid sequence, Gregor ignores everything Mashka says, while offering up a clearly libidinous discourse on the pear. "A pear's the best fruit. Lots of juice in a pear. Adam should have chosen a pear! I like the feel of a pear. And when you're through with it."

At her wit's end, Mashka overplays her hand when Gregor asks her if she'd choose the respectable daughter of Colonel Hassel or her, were she in his place. "All right, who would you choose," she asks, "a sweet little innocent or someone who knows the other door to the Black Room? Someone who's seen you carrying heavy things in there late at night . . ." Of course, she's gone too far and very soon she is one of those "heavy things" being carried through the secret entrance to the Black Room.

Gregor has, however, overplayed his hand in disposing of Mashka. It's not only one body too many, but he drops her scarf at the top of the stairs when taking her to the Black Room—enough evidence to have the townfolk come and pay an antisocial call. Surly and contemptuous of the rabble, Gregor nonetheless has a proposal—he'll renounce the title in favor of Anton and go away, a suggestion met with a singular lack of opposition. Naturally, Gregor has no intention of doing any such thing, but rather has a plan that will get him out of trouble with the locals and secure him Thea as a wife. Just before he's about to "leave," he shows Anton one final thing: the Black Room. The horrified Anton, looking into the pit in which Gregor has thrown Mashka's body (along with a vague number of others), realizes that everything he's heard about Gregor—and more—must be true. Unfortunately, it's a realization that comes too late and at too high a price, since Anton quickly finds himself tossed into the pit himself, lying face up with a knife through him. "There's nothing to fear, now. The prophecy can't be fulfilled," sneers Gregor. "It will be fulfilled," Anton assures him with his dying breath.

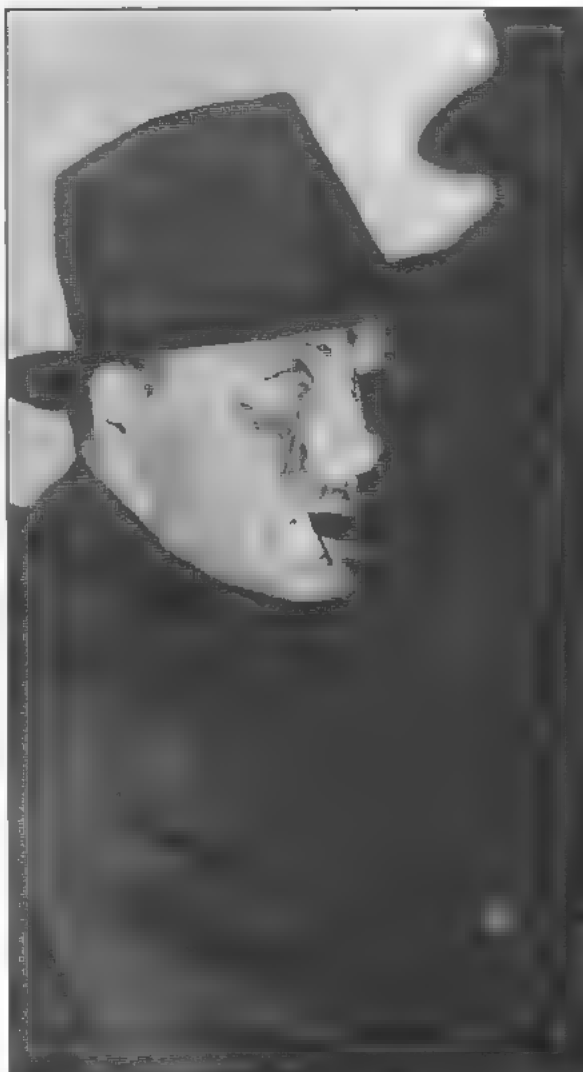
Gregor now "becomes" Anton, which he attempts to do in the mirrored surface of the Black Room's onyx walls, preening himself and adopting an impression of his brother's bearing. A measure of Karloff's greatness in this film is his ability to effectively suggest that he truly is Gregor masquerading as Anton. The character never seems quite the same as the real Anton. The friendliness

is a little unreal, the tone not quite so warm, as if this is merely a mask behind which he is hiding—one that might slip away far too easily. Indeed, that is the case. It isn't long before he gives himself away to Colonel Hassel—partly by not having thought through the impersonation to the point of realizing that he might have to wrt e with his left hand, and then by stupidly falling into Hassel's trap on the chess board ("You made exactly that same move three weeks ago.") The brutish Gregor murders Hassel to keep his secret—the crime conveniently pinned on Thea's real lover, Lieutenant Lussan (Robert Allen), thereby helping to pave the way for Gregor's marriage to Thea.

Gregor's superstitious nature and his need to gloat, however, compel him to have a look at his late brother in the Black Room. "Yes, you're dead, Anton. Good and dead. You're going to be married today, but you won't be there," he tells the corpse. What Gregor hasn't reckoned on is the fact that his brother's dog, Tor, will give the game away, which he does when he attacks the false Anton during the wedding. When Gregor uses his "paralyzed" arm to defend himself, the jig is up and he finds himself racing back to the castle with an angry mob in hot pursuit. No longer the surly, contemptuous tyrant, Karloff reveals Gregor at last as the pathetic little coward he always has been, as he hides in terror of the mob in the Black Room. It's less the mob he has to fear than Tor, though, who leaps at Gregor once the secret door is forced, knocking him backwards into the pit—where he is skewered by the knife sticking through Anton's body. "Both of them—the older brother killed by the younger brother's knife, and the prophecy has been fulfilled." It is the perfect ending to one of the thirties most nearly perfect horror films.

From the lofty heights of *THE BLACK ROOM*, Columbia dropped a considerable distance with their final quasi-horror offering from the first wave of horror, *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE* (1936). It's a film that invariably offers confusion, since the title is too like the same year's British Karloff film, *THE MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN*, an opus

that has nothing to do with Columbia's modest and thoughtful crime thriller. Rather than offer a horror star, *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE* gives us Ralph Bellamy in the lead. Columbia House of Horrors specialist Roy William Neill had left Hollywood for England after *THE BLACK ROOM*, where he started out strong with the George Arliss vehicle, *DR. SYN* (1937), only to soon find himself in charge of forgettable and largely unexportable Brit programmers, until his return to the States in 1942 to take over Universal's Sherlock Holmes series. In place of Neill, we find the former (and subsequent) post-impressionist painter, Harry Lachman, who landed at Columbia after a one picture deal with Hal Roach, where he directed the Laurel and Hardy feature, *OUR RELATIONS* (1936).



Ralph Bellamy's career in horror films consisted mainly of playing bland heroes, but in *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE* (1936) he got to play a monster of his own—the fire-scarred, thoroughly vicious gangster, Slick Rawley.





Ronald Quayle (Walter Byron) and Peggy (Bette Davis) contemplate one of horrorodom's favorite minor gods—Quetzacoatl, who, in addition to his appearance here in *THE MENACE* (1932), enlivened *THE FLYING SERPENT* (1946) and *Q* (1982). *THE MENACE* was based on Edgar Wallace's 1927 novel, *The Feathered Serpent*.

Lachman was an interesting filmmaker without ever being a terribly distinctive one. His final films before returning to painting were the last few of the 20th Century Fox Charlie Chan offerings in the early forties, all of which boast a strong visual sense. Lachman had begun his film career as an assistant to the pictorialist filmmaker Rex Ingram, so a concentration on visuals was hardly surprising. Certainly, his strength did not lie in dealing with people—not according to Keye Luke, who worked with him on *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE CIRCUS* (1936). Luke, who rarely said anything bad about anyone, plainly disliked Lachman, most particularly because of the way he treated that film's midget actors, George and Olive Brasseur. Lachman appears not to have endeared himself to any of the other actors, either, though quintessential cop player Willard Robertson, who had appeared in Lachman's *DANTE'S INFERNO* (1935), resurfaces here as—what else—the cop in charge of the case.

*THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE* is really only noir by name, not by nature. Its basic premise is actually closer to sci-fi, though its inspiration may well have been *THE RAVEN* (1935), to which it bears a passing resemblance in a key plot point (the concept of partially "improving" a criminal by making him look better). In style, the film is more an early *film noir* than anything else. Ralph Bellamy stars as Slick Rawley, a horribly scarred, thoroughly vicious criminal on the run from the law with his moll, Peggy (Isabel Jewell), and his worshipful sidekick, Gloves Baker (Ward Bond). "You never make a slip, do you, kid?" asks Gloves. "I made one when I knocked off that cop," Slick answers. "Now it's murder—and the heat never dies when it's the law that gets killed." He decides to take it on the lam solo, offering the parting instructions, "If you ever catch her looking at another man, cut her throat."

Successfully evading the police, Slick ducks into the Baldwin Medical School, where he takes refuge in the school auditorium just in time to hear Dr. Clifford Schuyler

(Thurston Hall) putting forth his "advanced" theories on criminal reform. "I don't think I'm going too far when I say that I think our first aim should be to cure, not to punish. I know I may be severely criticized for the stand I am taking on this social problem. Mind you, gentlemen, I'm not condoning crime in any form, nor am I making excuses for the criminal. What I am interested in are those criminals who either cannot or will not distinguish between right and wrong—for they are often leaders of criminals, and could be leaders among men. I believe that this is the victim of organic or functional disorder, and may be cured, gentlemen, by brain surgery. I am convinced that this type of criminal will be cured by the scientist rather than the warden."

Schuyler has made successful experiments on a dog and a monkey, in both cases finding a tumor exerting abnormal pressure on the brain and causing vicious behavior. Unfortunately, he says, the state will not let him operate on a convicted criminal to see if his theory holds true with human beings.

Soon enough, Schuyler gets his chance when Slick pays a call on him. "You said you could make a right guy out of a wrong one if you could only get the chance. Well, you're getting the chance right now. I'm the first guy you operate on—Slick Rawley," he informs Schuyler. Not surprisingly, Schuyler is hesitant to become involved, but Slick argues him into it, getting not only brain, but plastic surgery. The procedure transforms him from the disfigured Rawley into James Blake, who now looks exactly like B-picture leading man, A-picture supporting actor who never gets the girl, Ralph Bellamy. (It's intriguing, though surely coincidental, that Columbia began and ended its career in the first wave of horror with stories involving plastic surgery.) The operation also leaves Slick/Blake with absolutely no memory of his past.

*Continued on page 72*





# Record Rack

by Moss Clare

## Classic Musicals on DVD

For fans of classic Hollywood musicals the biggest news of 2000 (aside from the many DVD releases discussed here) was the reissue of a legendary "lost" film of our time, MGM's *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN*. First seen in 1950, for various reasons the film, based on Irving Berlin's biggest Broadway smash, eventually disappeared from distribution (including video) until its revival a year ago at the Motion Picture Academy in Los Angeles and its ensuing release on VHS and DVD.

*ANNIE GET YOUR GUN* had a notoriously stormy, even tragic production history which reached a climax with the suspension of its original star, Judy Garland (Frank Morgan, the film's original Buffalo Bill, also died during this first attempt and was replaced by Louis Calhern.) Director Busby Berkeley was replaced, but even after George Sidney took over with Betty Hutton stepping in for Garland, trouble continued when Howard Keel broke a leg early in the new shoot.

All the difficulties of getting *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN* to the screen were forgotten when the film became one of the major hits of 1950. It remains a wow, produced with all the creative clout (and bottomless budget) of MGM at the peak of its studio-era power. Sidney even gets a performance out of the usually over-the-top Hutton, who undergoes a charming transformation from backwoods bumpkin to glittering star of Buffalo Bill's spectacular Wild West Show. Howard Keel exudes virile charm and screen presence in his first Hollywood movie. Most of Berlin's classic score is retained, albeit with the more risqué lyrics toned down under the watchful eye of period censorship (as was often the case with Broadway adaptations). Berlin wrote one new song, "Go West Again," and though cut from the 1950 print, the outtake, sung by Hutton on a huge cattle barge as Buffalo Bill's troop returns broke from its European tour, is a bonus feature on DVD. Some fascinating Garland footage is also on view, including the "I'm an Indian, Too" number, which, as staged in a more than slightly scarlet setting by Berkeley, is only slightly less infernal than the erupting volcano sequence in *FANTASIA*.

Fans of MGM trivia may also note that the hotel in the opening scenes of *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN* was again seen (as a Catskill resort) in the period Jane Powell/

Debbie Reynolds musical, *TWO WEEKS WITH LOVE* (1950).

The other lavish and entertaining musicals of MGM veteran George Sidney have always been among my personal favorites, beautifully designed, imaginatively shot, and always featuring a plethora of wonderfully staged, sometimes bizarre musical numbers. A key example on DVD is *ANCHORS AWEIGH* (1945). The plot is pure fluff: sailor buddies Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra chase Jose Iturbi around WWII Hollywood in an effort to get aspiring starlet Kathryn Grayson an



Red Skelton appeared in a number of notable MGM musicals in the forties and fifties, but that isn't him with Riff-Raff (Richard O'Brien) in the 20th Century Fox production of *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW* (1975).

audition at MGM. But what happens along the way! Kelly dances with Jerry Mouse in a marvelous animated fairy tale sequence, pianist Iturbi performs Liszt with a virtual armada of grand pianos on the stage of the Hollywood Bowl, and Kathryn gets to sing an aria

(adapted from Tchaikovsky's "Serenade for Strings") with Iturbi and the MGM symphony. And, as always in Sidney's chock-full musical extravaganzas, there's much, much more.

Other MGM musical DVDs (all released through Warner Bros.) include two more Broadway adaptations, *GOOD NEWS* (1947), the charming collegiate musical with the fabulous Joan McCracken/Ray McDonald "Pass That Peace Pipe" number (with music by Roger Edens), and the always fresh *ON THE TOWN* (1949), freely adapted from the Bernstein/Comden/Green original. Also available: what many justifiably consider the greatest original film musical ever made, *SINGIN' IN THE RAIN* (1952), also brilliantly scripted by Comden and Green.

While MGM triumphed in the musicals of the forties and fifties, Warner Bros. produced some of the greatest early examples of the genre in the thirties. A landmark musical and simply a great film is Warners' wonderful *42ND STREET* (1933), which launched the legendary Busby Berkeley musicals of the Depression Era. While the sharply scripted backstage action of *42ND STREET* is pretty much contained in a realistic theatrical setting for most of the film, when the climactic Warren/Dubin musical numbers commence all considerations of reality are blown through the soundstage roof, and a never before seen style of production number, totally cinéfantastique, kicks in. (As George Sidney said at the Academy screening of *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN* "Where's Busby Berkeley? How high the boom?")

Warners' musicals slacked off by the fifties and I have to admit that even the appeal of a certified classic, the 1954 *A STAR IS BORN*, has always eluded me. I personally feel that Garland never made a really good musical after MGM, and though here she certainly more than delivers, I find the mixed score and the sub-MGM production design disappointing. Nevertheless, for fans of the film (and they are legion) it's all here in the recently reconstructed version remastered for DVD.

After thirties Warner Bros. and forties/fifties MGM, almost any other musical is a bit of a comedown (though there's much to be said for the glossy, early forties 20th Century Fox efforts as well). Paramount musicals were usually star-driven if sometimes dull affairs, mostly due to tedious plotlines and lackluster scripting.





**LEFT:** In *42ND STREET* (1933), neither Warner Baxter (as director Julian Marsh) and Ruby Keeler (as chorine Peggy Sawyer) nor Dick Powell (as juvenile Billy Lawler) and Bebe Daniels (as star Dorothy Brock) are romantically involved. In the 1932 novel by Bradford Ropes, however, Marsh and Lawler are lovers. Ropes was himself a Broadway hoofer who later went on to work on a number of screenplays, including those for the Abbott and Costello films *THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES* (1946) and *BUCK PRIVATE'S COME HOME* (1947). **RIGHT:** *Sitting Bull* (J. Carrol Naish), Annie Oakley (Betty Hutton), and Buffalo Bill (Louis Calhern) head West again in *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN* (1950). **BELOW:** Gene Kelly and Jerry the Mouse were teamed in *ANCHORS AWEIGH* (1945).

The Betty Hutton vehicle *THE PERILS OF PAULINE* (1947), freely based on the life of serial queen Pearl White, is one of the better efforts. Like other Paramount Huttons, *PAULINE* is graced by the contributions of ace Hollywood (later Broadway) songwriter, the great Frank Loesser, and includes several Loesser gems, including the haunting "I Wish I Didn't Love You So," the rambunctious boogie-woogie number (never mind that the film is set in the silent movie era!) "Rumble, Rumble, Rumble," and the racy "Poppa Don't Preach to Me."

MCM always played fast and loose with Broadway scores, yet still produced one of the great film musicals with *ON THE TOWN*, in spite of the fact that most of Leonard Bernstein's original songs were tossed (The sophisticated Bernstein sound still suffuses the film via its orchestral ballet sequences and exuberant opening number.) But after 1960, the film musical underwent a kind of schizoid identity crisis and true musical dementia set in. Hit musicals were either turned into interminable behemoths including every chapter and verse of the original production (1961's *WEST SIDE STORY*, 1964's *MY FAIR LADY*) or went to the other extreme and relegated scores to mere underscoring (1961's *FANNY*, 1963's *IRMA LA DOUCE*). A late exception to all

this was Robert Wise's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *THE SOUND OF MUSIC* (1965), which actually turned the Broadway original into a real movie, with most (but not all) of the score intact. The play was opened up in the best sense of the word, and, assuming a high tolerance for saccharine, remains shamelessly enjoyable, even moving. And certainly picturesque.

A show that fared less well cinematically was Stephen Sondheim's first hit musical as composer/lyricist, *A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM* (1966), with only a very few Sondheim numbers surviving in the Richard Lester film version. It's certainly of interest, but more for Lester's frenetically wacky comedy style than as a Broadway adaptation. A more comprehensive late-period Broadway transcription is Frank Loesser's Pulitzer Prize-winning *HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING* (1967). Much of Loesser's brilliant score is retained, as well as original leads Robert Morse and Rudy Vallee. An inventive Hollywood addition is the glossily populuxe production design and color styling of former Disney artist, Mary Blair.

Which all leads us to that bizarre last gasp of postmodern rock musical mania—no, no, not *XANADU*, but *THE*

*ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW* (1975). The stage RHS was still playing to relatively full houses when the film version premiered in a near-empty London cinema. Yes, the film was pretty much of a bomb the first time round, but then it hit the midnight movie circuit and the rest is history.

The British film, a kind of psychedelic Hammer horror movie, is now further perpetuated by 20th Century Fox in a comprehensive DVD edition (which includes two good stage tunes, "Once in Awhile," and "Superheroes," dropped from the movie), so Time Warpsters everywhere can now draw and/or reassess their own conclusions.



#### ANCHORS AWEIGH

\$24.98

ANNIE GET YOUR GUN

A STAR IS BORN

42ND STREET

GOOD NEWS

ON THE TOWN

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

\$19.98

All Warner Home Video

#### THE PERIL OF PAULINE

The Roan Group

\$19.95

#### A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON

THE WAY TO THE FORUM

HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS

WITHOUT REALLY TRYING

MGM Home Entertainment

\$19.98 each

#### THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE

SHOW

20th Century Fox

\$26.98

#### THE SOUND OF MUSIC

20th Century Fox

\$29.98





# The Pictures of Dorian Gray

*Part Three of a study of the  
Oscar Wilde classic and its  
many dramatizations...*

by Lelia Loban  
and Richard Valley

"The Wilde case is over, and at last the curtain has fallen on the most horrible scandal which has disturbed social life in London for many years. The cries of 'Shame!' with which the sentence pronounced by Mr. Justice Wills was received, indicate that a certain section of the public in court regarded the verdict with disfavour, and that feeling will very possibly be shared by a section of the public outside. But it is well to remember, that the jury are in a position to form the best and honest opinion. They have heard all the evidence and seen the witnesses in the box, while outsiders have only newspaper reports—necessarily containing the barest suggestion of the gruesome facts—to guide them. Yet even those who have read the reports and have taken the trouble to understand what lies between the lines, cannot help but feel that Wilde and his associate... have got off lightly. Society is well rid of these ghouls and their hideous practices. Wilde practically confessed his guilt at the outset, and the unclean creatures with whom he chose to herd specifically owned that the charges were true. It is at a terrible cost that society has purged itself of these loathsome importers of exotic vice, but the gain is worth the price, and it is refreshing to feel that for once, at least, justice has been done."

—*News of the World*,  
May 26, 1895

"The security of society lies in custom and unconscious instinct, and the basis of stability of society, as a healthy organism, is the complete absence of any intelligence among its members."

—Oscar Wilde



**B**y the time his best and most famous play *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*, was produced in February 1895, Oscar Wilde's life was already careening headlong into scandal and disaster. The celebrated wit's affair with the blonde, beautiful, Dorianesque Lord Alfred Douglas had enraged Douglas' father, the Marquess of Queensbury, who was a dangerous—indeed, a dangerous—man to make angry. The Marquess repeatedly made demands that Oscar and Bosie (as Douglas was affectionately called) come to a parting of the ways, but neither paid much attention to the "funny little man," as Bosie called his apoplectic parent. Wilde was in love, and Bosie, though he harbored a genuine affection for the much older, considerably less attractive man, basked in reflected glory.

Thwarted, Queensbury plotted to publicly denounce Wilde at the opening of *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*, but was refused a ticket. Instead, he left a card at Wilde's club, accusing his son's lover of "posing as a sodomite." (The Mad Marquess was not only a nutcase, but a very poor speller.) Against the advice of his friends (but at the urging of Douglas), Wilde charged Queensbury with libel—thus rendering it possible for the opposition to prove in court, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that he, Wilde, was a homosexual, at a time when engaging in homosexual practices was against British law. The libel was lost, and Wilde himself was put on trial twice—the first trial ending with a hung jury, the second with a guilty verdict. (Inevitably, the subject of Wilde's scandalous novel of 1890, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, had been brought up in court, where it was used as a weapon against its creator.) By May of 1895, some four months after *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST* had made him the toast of London society, Oscar Wilde was in jail, serving two years at hard labor. By November of 1900, he was dead.

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"One should never make one's debut with a scandal. One should reserve that to give an interest to one's old age."

—Oscar Wilde

Scandal has always surrounded *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and it does so, to a certain extent, to this day. When it was first published, the novel was roundly criticized for being practically pornographic in every way, so it's only fitting that a number of porn films in recent years have been "inspired" by the novel. The films usually feature gay, male/male sex scenes, the title character is usually rechristened Dorian Gay, and they're neither better nor worse than most hardcore fare of this nature.

One Dorian-inspired porno that achieved minor—extremely minor—fame is *TAKE OFF* (1978), which starred Wade Nichols (probably a pseudonym) as Darrin Blue and Georgina Spelvin (definitely a pseudonym) as Henrietta Wilde. The film was directed by Armand Weston (another pseudonym, this one for Anthony Spinelli, who is credited under his own name as producer), with a screenplay by Daria Price. Spinelli (as Armand Weston) won the AFAA (Adult Film Association of America) Award for Best Director and Georgina Spelvin won for Best Supporting Actress for this picture. Not surprisingly, *TAKE OFF* consisted

mainly of a series of sex-inspired parodies (in other words, "take offs") of other pictures.

The latest "adult" Dorian adaptation is *THE PORNO PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*, produced by All Worlds Video, starring Eric Hansen, and directed by Wash West. Its story concerns a student who searches for a mysterious porn star/director who has appeared youthfully studly throughout all epochs of erotica since the fifties.

There have been a number of foreign-language adaptations of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as well, including *LE PORTRAIT DE DORIAN GRAY* (1983), a French telefilm directed by Pierre Boutron, with Raymond Gerome as Lord Henry Wotton and Patrice Alexandre as Dorian Gray; *THE IMAGE OF DORIAN GRAY IN THE YELLOW PRESS*

(1984), covered elsewhere in this issue of *Scarlet Street*, and *A CENA COL VAMPIRO* (1988), a telefilm directed by Lamberto Bava for the Retelitalia TV series *BRIVIDO GIALLO*.

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"After all, what is fashion? From the artistic point of view it is usually a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to change it every six months!"

—Oscar Wilde



In TV's *THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY* (1983), Dorian Gray was not only a gorgeous woman, but a supermodel in the New York City of the fifties.

gender of Dorian Gray and several other major characters from Oscar Wilde's classic novel. The results, like *MAD MONSTER PARTY*, were lambasted. Unlike *MAD MONSTER PARTY*, though, *THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY* has never achieved cult status—it's barely even remembered—but it is worthy of reappraisal.

Tony Maylam directed a screenplay by Ken August and Peter Lawrence that relocates the story to Manhattan and updates its present-day scenes to about 1982. The screenplay paraphrases Wilde's dialogue in modern American English and refashions his situations into contemporary counter parts. Karen Bromley, the production designer for 1970's *THE SECRET OF DORIAN GRAY* (*Scarlet Street* #42), was art director for *THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY*. Bromley, costume designer Linda Matheson, and cinematographer Zale Magder gave this movie a look that's trendy but less self-consciously outlandish than the 1973 Commonwealth United Entertainment effort.





In *SINS*, Anthony Perkins plays not Wilde's Lord Henry Wotton, but Henry Lord, an American business tycoon whose conglomerate includes a cosmetics company, an advertising agency, and a film studio. Henry narrates the story. Belinda Bauer plays Dorian Gray as a female supermodel. Bauer handles the role reasonably well, given the character's shallowness, but lacks the screen presence to make this distaff Dorian completely fascinating. Joseph Bottoms plays Stuart Vane, the counterpart of Wilde's Sybil Vane. Olga Karlatos, as director Sofia Lord (Henry Lord's wife), shares the function of Basil Hallward, who paints the fateful portrait in most other adaptations (as he does in the novel), with Alan Campbell (Michael Ironside). Campbell, who usually figures in the story only as a blackmail victim (and probable lover) of Dorian's, here is the photographer who shoots Dorian's screen test, TV commercials, and magazine advertisements.

The story begins before the opening credits. It's night in New York City. On the soundtrack, a saxophone plays soft jazz. Female fingers tap impatiently on a car steering wheel, while from the point of view of the driver we watch a woman leave a neon-lit club that looks seedy in a trendy way. The woman, wearing dark glasses (at right) and buried in a huge white fur, is Dorian Gray, and the female fingers belong to Angela Vane (Caroline Yeager). The distraught Angela confronts Dorian on the street, and threatens her with a huge knife. "Murderer! You killed my husband and my baby!" Dorian successfully argues that she's too young to be Stuart Vane's seducer, and makes her escape. Out of Angela's sight, Dorian leans against a wall and gasps for breath. She looks frightened and remorseful. The opening credits roll, to the strains of a cheesy title tune with music by Bernard Hoffer and lyrics by Jules Bass, sung by Lisa Dal Bello.

Unlike the novel and other versions, Dorian isn't saddled with pet names such as Prince (Princess?) Charming or Sir (Lady?) Tristram. Dorian is a world-famous model whose unchanging face has graced the covers of magazines for decades. There's no reason for Angela Vane not to recognize Dorian with certainty, but still she lets the glamorous, fur-clad woman convince her otherwise. Exit Angela Vane, never to be seen again in the telefilm's "modern" scenes. (In the original, of course, Sybil Vane's brother, Jim, is accidentally killed as he lays in wait to kill Dorian.)

Following the credits, Dorian (dressed entirely in white and looking rather wistful) and silver-haired Henry Lord meet for the first time in 10 years, in the penthouse apartment he's kept intact during her absence. It's full of framed magazine covers and stills from Dorian's glory years as a

supermodel. One *Newsweek* cover reads, "What ever happened to Dorian Gray?"—a line that inevitably echoes *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* (1962), the film in which an insane former child star (Bette Davis) grotesquely attempts to look young, while her movie-star sister (Joan Crawford) obsessively watches old movies of herself in all her youthful glory. Dorian, of course, really does look the same as she did 30 years ago, and it's clear that Henry knows why. He doesn't seem evil or cynical, as do many Lord Henrys, but sadder and wiser.

The movie flashes back to 1953, and—shades of *A STAR IS BORN* (1954)—we discover Dorian as a drive-in carhop with dreams of movie stardom. Looking anxious and wistful as she views her glamorous screen test with director Sofia Lord, Dorian says, "I wonder how I'd feel if I saw myself on this film, 20 or 30 years from now?" The test shows a brief scene set in Wilde's Victorian era, with Dorian playing a model who poses for a painter, Paul (Chris Kelk). Over time, the test will stay "exactly the same as it is today. I will have aged, you know, like those actresses who watch their old movies on television. Wish it was the other way around. Wish it was the picture that got old and suffered and aged, and I stayed the same . . . To stay young forever—I'd give anything for that." Sofia wisely counsels Dorian to accept the passage of time, and gives her a gift—the one and only copy of her test.

A dark-haired Henry Lord, who has watched the test from the projection room, introduces himself and acts somewhat flirtatious. He tells Dorian "Your test is really quite remarkable. The camera seems almost capable of reading your thoughts. A dangerous quality, but an appealing one." Dorian, betraying the streak of narcissism that is the undoing of every Dorian Gray, is pleased and flattered.

Sofia, the serious artist, wants her movie to bring out the fascinating qualities that she sees in the original, real Dorian Henry, the commercial vulgarian, steals Dorian's soul by turning her into product. He showers Dorian with limousine rides, expensive presents (including a rear-projector home entertainment center on which Dorian can endlessly watch the screen test), and, above all, lavish praise, to flatter the naive young woman and obligate her to him. He suggests that Dorian back out of his own wife's movie project to become the new model for one of his companies, *Mystique Cosmetics*. A spacious apartment in a high-rent building comes with the job. Dorian is tempted.

Later, Dorian visits Henry in his office, which is full of mirrors. From behind his desk, Henry opens the mirrored panels to reveal a huge portrait of Dorian as the *Mystique Girl*. (The scene faintly echoes one in *FUNNY FACE*, in







**PAGE 50:** Images from *THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY*, featuring Belinda Bauer as supermodel Dorian, Anthony Perkins as ruthless business tycoon Henry Lord (a variation on the Lord Henry Wotton of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*), and Joseph Bottoms as lounge singer Stuart Vane (Sybil Vane in Wilde's novel). **LEFT:** *THE SECRET OF DORIAN GRAY* (1970) was set in the swinging London of the seventies, and Sybil Vane (Marie Liljedahl) wasn't the sexual innocent of earlier versions. Helmut Berger (also pictured on page 52 played Dorian. **CENTER:** A young Angela Lansbury's performance as Sybil was much closer to the original concept, though MGM's *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* (1945) made her a music hall singer instead of a Shakespearean actress. **BELOW:** Joseph Bottoms (in a picture from a typically revealing photo spread in *After Dark* magazine) played Stuart Vane as none too innocent, but he was no match for the devouring Dorian.

which Fred Astaire, as photographer Dick Avery, convinces Audrey Hepburn, as Jo Stockton, to become a model by showing her a full-face photograph that perfectly captures her supposedly "eccentric" beauty.) Dorian agrees to model for Henry, which pleases him but doesn't surprise him in the least. He's a man accustomed to getting whatever he wants.

Anthony Perkins's biographer, Charles Winecoff, agrees with most of the reviewers that Perkins "walked through" the film and "gave the kind of robotically arch performance that was quickly becoming his calling card" (*Split Image: The Life of Anthony Perkins*, Dutton, 1996.)

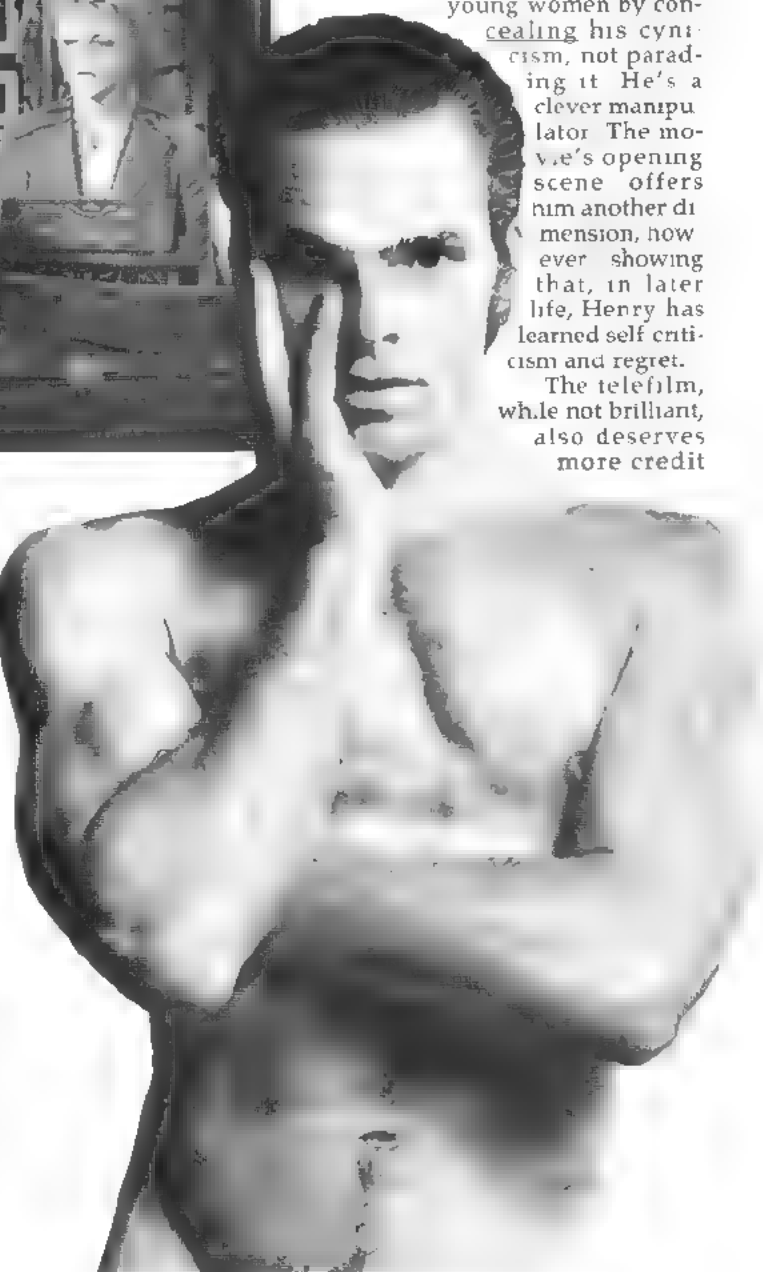
It's too harsh an assessment, though it's true that Perkins had lost a lot of his edge since his trademark performance in *PSYCHO* (1960). During the filming of *SINS*, Perkins generated negative publicity with his strange behavior. His mental and physical health had deteriorated and, although nobody knew it then, he had less than a decade left to live (He died of AIDS-related complications in 1992.) Strung out on booze, amphetamines, and probably other drugs, Perkins created a scandal within weeks of the *SINS* broadcast, when *People* magazine published a cover story and interview by Brad Darrach. Perkins gave Darrach a lurid, Freudian account of a lonely childhood, with alleged recovered memories of child sexual abuse. He said the love of a good woman saved him from early experiments in gay sex. (The good woman was actor and photographer Berenice "Berry" Berenson, whom he married in 1973. On September 11, 2001, she died as a passenger on American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston, when terrorists crashed the plane into the World Trade Center.) The *People* interview outraged Perkins's family and friends, who thought he made up some things and exaggerated others, in an unsuccessful attempt to hide that he was gay. (Among Perkins' lovers were dancers Timmy Everett, who played Tommy Djilas in the 1962 screen version of *THE MUSIC MAN*, and Grover Dale, whose credits include 1964's *THE UNSINKABLE MOLLY BROWN*.)

Though Henry Lord is far from a landmark performance, Perkins certainly didn't phone it in. He does well

with the material at hand but the script never gives Perkins the scope for the deliciously over-the-top nastiness that makes George Sanders so memorable in MGM's *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* (1945). Perkins' Henry succeeds as a capitalist and as a seducer of modern, independent

young women by concealing his cynicism, not parading it. He's a clever manipulator. The movie's opening scene offers him another dimension, however showing that, in later life, Henry has learned self-criticism and regret.

The telefilm, while not brilliant, also deserves more credit





than it's previously received. It addresses the serious question, much in the news in the early eighties, of whether the media idealizes a fundamentally unhealthy image of feminine beauty that promotes anorexia, bulimia, and drug abuse among young women. (It also subtly parodies the high fashion musical of 1957, *FUNNY FACE*, which started that thinnest of movie stars, Audrey Hepburn.) Henry tells Dorian he repaid his previous *Mystique Girl* because she can't "take off five years the way she takes off five pounds."

In her darkened apartment, as Dorian watches herself on the screen, Henry's voiceover points out that her screen-test image has already begun to change, looking older, more knowing, less innocent. For her first sin, Dorian abandons her commitment to *Sol*'s film and succumbs to Henry's temptations. These include a sexual relationship avoided by most previous adaptations, in which both Dorian and Henry are male.

Dorian soon begins having an affair with Stuart Vane (Joseph Bottoms). An amateur pianist and singer with vague professional aspirations, he lives in a low-income neighborhood and works part time as a gofer in the advertising studio by day. At night, Stuart tends bar in a lounge, where the owner lets him play light jazz for \$20 a night and all the beer he can drink. He's hardly the innocent Sybil Vane of Wilde's novel, but Stuart is still naive and a born victim.

In bed in her apartment, Stuart tells Dorian something she already knows—that he's married. Cold-bloodedly, Dorian wants him to get a divorce, even though Angela Vane thinks she's pregnant. Dorian slips out of bed, telling Stuart he'll have to "take care of your problem first" before she'll have sex with him.

Dorian brings out the worst in Stuart, who becomes abusive toward his pregnant wife and fails to accept paternal responsibility. (In the precredits scene, Angela's accusa-

tions imply that she either miscarries or has an abortion because of Dorian's homewrecking.) When Angela charges Stuart with cheating on her, he irascibly leaves their apartment, then berates Angela about the mess and complains because there's no beer! (Stuart, at least, knows that the marriage—he and Angela were childhood sweethearts—was a mistake and should be ended. Downtrodden Angela clings to Stuart as if he were a life preserver, while he reacts as if she were the heaviest of anchors.)

Henry, who's heard Stuart play and is unimpressed, advises Dorian not to waste her time trying to make a success out of him. ("Dorian, if you're going to have an affair, I'd suggest a prince or a president, not a bartender walking out on his pregnant wife, whose sole ambition on earth is to play the piano for 20 bucks a night and tips.") Stuart himself is quite content to remain small-time. He says he tried a big club and didn't like it. (The viewer might wonder how the big club liked him.) It's not entirely clear how bad Stuart's music is supposed to be, since it sounds no worse than the rest of Bernard Hoffer's misbegotten "easy listening" score. Certainly, the lame moon-june-spoon lyrics by Jules Bass are abysmal. ("I need to make a new beginning, Play a game I'm winning/I need you.") Nevertheless, thanks to Henry's string-pulling on behalf of Dorian, Stuart lands a spot on Dick Clark's *AMERICAN BANDSTAND*. (This is perhaps *THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY*'s cleverest joke: Clark, seen in footage from an actual *fifties* episode of the long-running *BANDSTAND*, was, for decades, known as a perpetually youthful, preternaturally ageless man. Countless comics made reference to the painting hidden in Dick Clark's attic.)

Eventually, Stuart blows his big chance, showing up too stoned to perform. Dorian, disgusted and unsympathetic, dumps the young hunk on the spot. Henry encourages Dorian's decision, on the grounds that Stuart's a loser and a druggie. Even though it's partly Dorian's fault that Stuart deteriorates so rapidly, Stuart is far more unworthy (of anybody, not just Dorian) than Wilde's original Sybil was—a fact that makes Henry's motives more plausible and sympathetic, but also intrinsically less interesting. Drug abuse is a rational reason to dump somebody. Stuart barges into Dorian's apartment building and begs her to take him back, but she'll have none of it. "You're not the person I was in love with," she says. "You never make anything happen, Stuart, and you never will." (The scenes parallels Dorian's rejection of Sybil after her poor Shakespeare performance in Wilde's novel.) Angrily, Dorian slams the door in his face. Stuart may be no Elvis, but nevertheless he leaves the building, driving off on his motorbike.

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Morning. Dorian's penthouse. Lots of pill bottles next to the bed. Henry arrives with news of the fatal accident, interrupting Dorian as she tries to explain that she's had a change of heart and plans to marry Stuart. The news shocks and upsets her, but Dorian's main concern, as always, is herself. "He's not dead because of me, is he?" Henry looks doubtful and says nothing. Dorian continues, tearfully, "I'm not a heartless person, am I, Henry?" Without a word, but with one meaningful glance back, Henry leaves. (His behavior here is still manipulative. He turned Dorian against Stuart, but now he implies that she's to blame for the poor fool's downfall.) Alone, Dorian breaks down, guilt-ridden, crying hyster-

## Mr. Smith Goes Wilde Dick Smith

interviewed by  
**Michael R. Thomas**

**T**he date: December 6, 1961. Among the popular shows on television are *THE UNTOUCHABLES*, *LEAVE IT TO BEAVER*, *THE DICK VAN DYKE SHOW*, *PERRY MASON*, *77 SUNSET STRIP*, *MAVERICK*, *THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW*, *SURFIDE SIX*, and *I'VE GOT A SECRET*. But for increasingly rare exceptions such as *ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS*, *THRILLER*, and *TWILIGHT ZONE*, anthology series are a thing of the past.

The program: One of those increasingly rare exceptions—*THE BRECHT GOLDEN SHOWCASE* production of *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*, starring George C. Scott as Lord Henry Wotton, Louis Hayward as Basil Hallward, Susan Oliver as Sybil Vane, and John Fraser as Dorian Gray.

The problem for David Suskind's TV production company: exactly how to show what happens when the results of decades of decadence, heretofore stored up in visual form on a man's oil portrait, are transferred in one horrific instant to that man's body, like a lethal blast from some malevolent, supernatural storage battery.

The solution: preeminent makeup genius and surrogate father to scores of present-day special effects makeup artists, the one... Dick Smith!

Dick Smith was kind enough to grant this interview to *Scarlet Street*'s Michael R. Thomas (a surrogate son) and reminisced about the operation of those aforementioned stunning and unforgettable results.

*Scarlet Street:* Did you create the final day integration effect for the TV production of *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* while you were at still working NBC?

Dick Smith: No, it wasn't for NBC. It was when I left NBC to work for David Suskind for two years, freelance. The year was 1961.

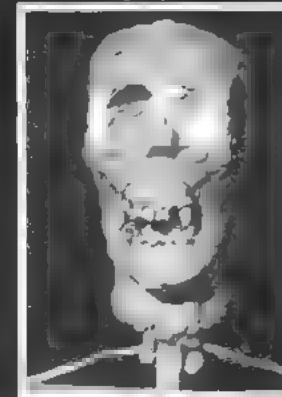
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DS: I did have to saw through a human skull for one project, but not in the case of *DORIAN GRAY*. It was not a human skull. What I did was to throw the head together using a cheap plaster skull available, in those days, from a big art store in New York. I sawed off the jaw and refixed it in an open position. I used that as a base and sculpted on top of it with Plastolene oil-based modeling clay first, then I finished it with mortician's

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**LEFT:** A series of startling photographs originally appearing in the May 1962 issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* (published by James Warren, edited by Forrest J. Ackerman) detail the steps taken to create the frightening face of Dorian Gray. The plaster skull has had its jaw sawn off and reattached in open-mouthed horror, and its mouth filled with rotted teeth and bloody gums made of dental wax. Call a dentist, by gum! The right eye socket has been enlarged. **CENTER:** Working from the bottom up with modeling clay, Dick Smith has fleshed out Dorian's neck, chin, and what's left of his nose (not much, but more than Michael Jackson's). **RIGHT:** Dorian's noggin has been almost completely covered with modeling clay.



Continued on page 56



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Continued on page 56



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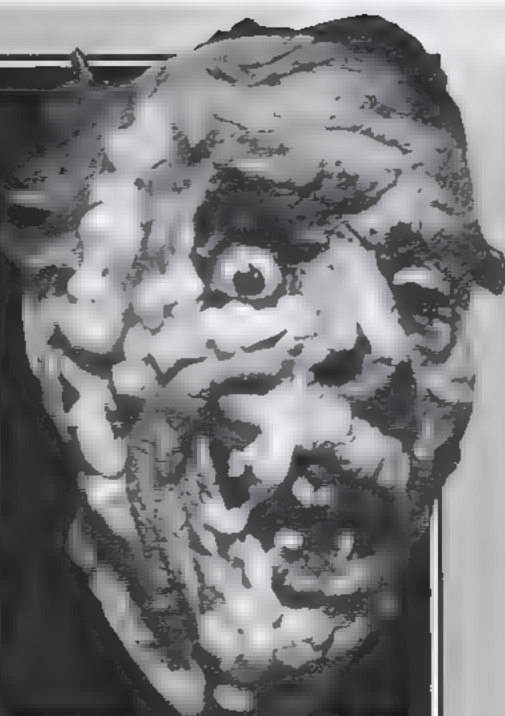
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*Scarlet Street:* Did you create the final disintegration effect for the TV production of THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY while you were at still working NBC?

Dick Smith: No, it wasn't for NBC. It was when I left NBC to work for David Susskind for two years, freelance. The year was 1961.

*SS:* This wasn't the production for which you had to saw through a human skull to operate a horror effect, was it?

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wax to get all these nasty, fatty, waxy-looking things. I got those fatty things to look nice and smooth by flaming them with a torch so they were semi-melted. Then, I sealed the whole thing with two or three coats of cap material—the liquid vinyl that plastic bald caps are made from—to make it more durable so that I could press in texture. I used coarse black plastic sponges, and I could press in really deep pits and so forth. I went over it and textured the damn thing like crazy, the worst extreme texture I could set.

*Continued on page 73*

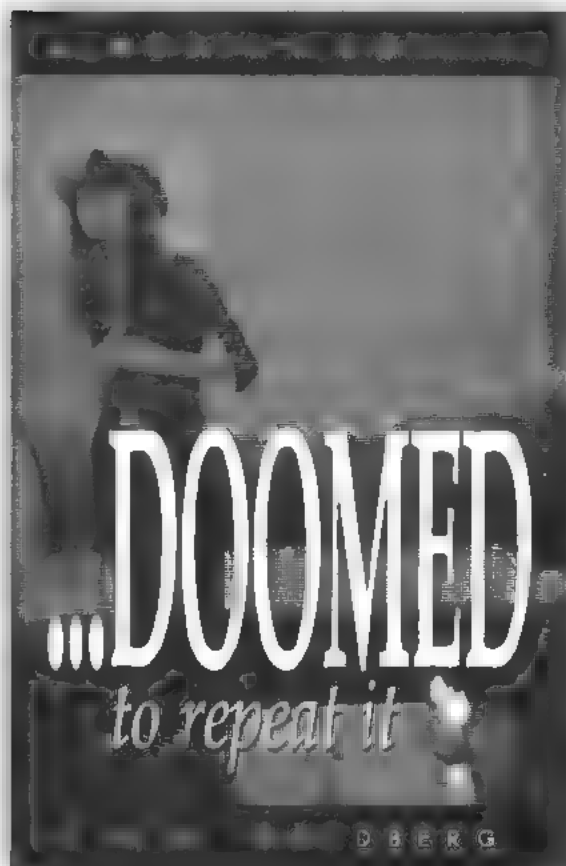
LEFT: A series of startling photographs originally appearing in the May 1962 issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* (published by James Warren, edited by Forrest J Ackerman) detail the steps taken to create the frightening face of Dorian Gray. The plaster skull has had its jaw sawn off and reattached in open-mouthed horror, and its mouth filled with rotted teeth and bloody gums made of dental wax. Call a dentist, by gum! The right eye socket has been enlarged. CENTER: Working from the bottom up with modeling clay, Dick Smith has fleshed out Dorian's neck, chin, and what's left of his nose (not much, but more than Michael Jackson's). RIGHT: Dorian's noggin has been almost completely covered with modeling clay





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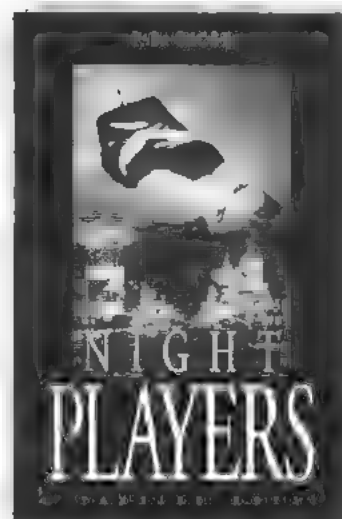
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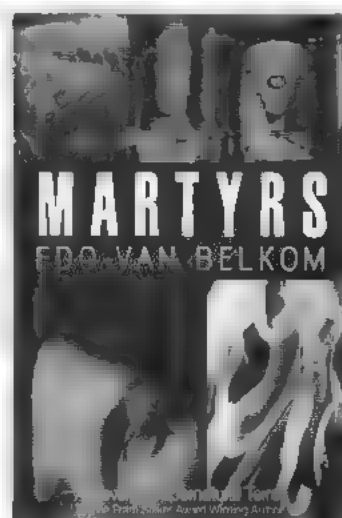
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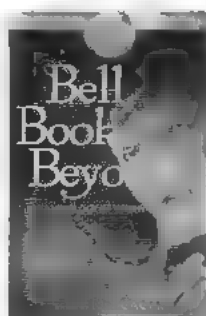
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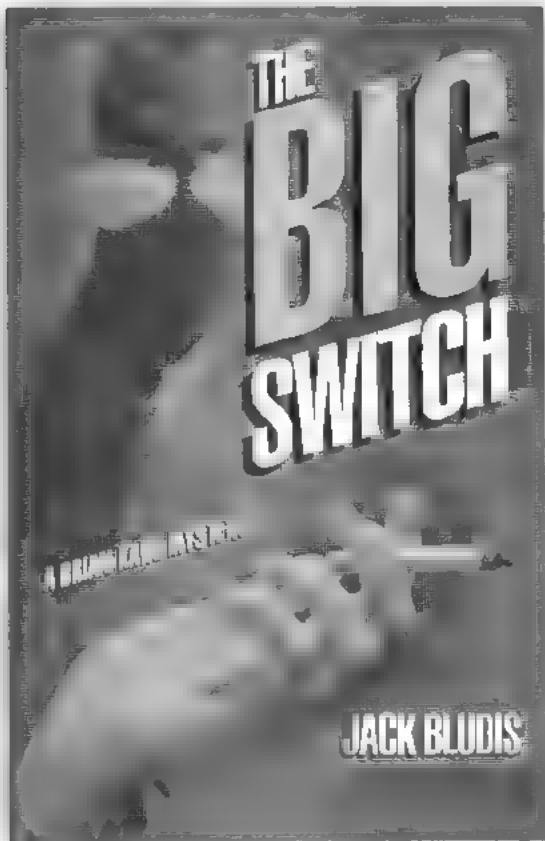


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This is Kane's turf. Brian Kane, Hollywood P.I.

It's a standard case, as un-glamorous as they come. Hired by a mega-star's wife to catch her cheating husband with another casting-couch hopeful. Till one starlet winds up dead. Then another. When Kane's client turns out to be an imposter, and thugs are trying to scare him off, he's suddenly suspect #1 in his own case. And the body count keeps growing.

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Popular hard-boiled Rockford, Illinois P.I. Joe Hannibal is back, this time swept up in a murderous mystery in a Wisconsin summer resort town. It'll take two fists and a lot of guts to navigate through the tacky tourist traps and gin mills, while dangerous dames are determined to steer Hannibal clear of the town's darkest secrets.

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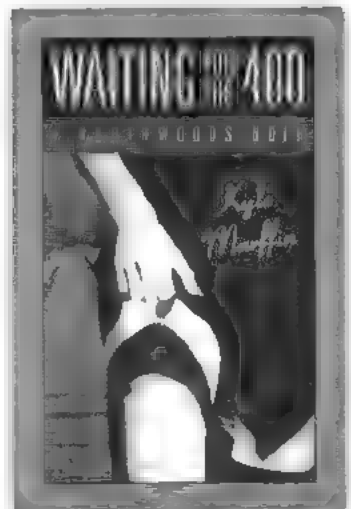
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## Waiting For The 400

A NORTHWOODS NOIR  
By Kyle Marfin

She's the kind of dame that can turn a man's head, till danger doesn't matter anymore, till desire can only lead to death. Because folks are dying, and the tiny northwoods station master's in over his head, waiting for the 400 and his red-headed beauty to step off the train with his ticket out of town.

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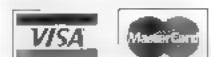
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## THE PICTURES OF DORIAN GRAY

*Continued from page 52*

ically. Then she watches her screen test again. As Mae West said of Victor McLaglen's ugly mug in *KLONDIKE ANNIE* (1936), her televised image "ain't no oil paintin'."

Dorian's brief guilt over Stuart's death leads her not to change her evil ways, but to self-pitying, self-destructive behavior. She drinks, does drugs, and sleeps around. She mistreats her coworkers. She invites drag queens to parties. (This last, of course, is emblematic of the way *SINS* reverses the genders of so many of Wilde's characters.) She behaves, in other words, like a celebrity—but, unlike other celebrities (even Dick Clark), she never grows old.

As the years pass, Dorian, instead of earning the right to real self-esteem, starts believing her own publicity. She turns from an innocent young woman into a queen bee who stings anyone who disturbs her. Dorian keeps her old screen test in a burl maple cabinet with push-button doors that open onto a very large screen, the better for Dorian to obsess over this modern equivalent of the Oscar Wilde painting. The screen-test persona mutates from an appealing ingenue to a stuck-up diva to an over-the-hill hag. It's rather like watching Joan Crawford in *OUR DANCING DAUGHTERS* (1928), *HARRIET CRAIG* (1950), and *STRAIT-JACKET* (1964), all in one movie.

Meanwhile, the manufactured image of the Mystique Girl all but supplants the real Dorian, with pictures of Dorian Gray appearing in newspapers, magazines, on walls, and on television. (*FUNNY FACE* had its Quality Girl, but that's the wrong image for Dorian—all her qualities are bad ones.) When Dorian's makeup artist, Tracy (Patsy Rahn), finally rebels against the supermodel's unprofessional behavior, Dorian flies into a violent rage, kicks everybody out of the studio, and then goes berserk, trashing her dressing room. The broken mirror above her dressing-room table reflects her face as a Cubist picture of Dorian Gray, with only one eye and her pouty mouth clearly visible. Obviously, but effectively, the fractured reflection depicts the brokenness of the original woman.

In a voiceover, describing Dorian's life 20 years after he hired her, Henry says, "Increasingly remote and isolated, Dorian searched for sensations that were new, delightful, and, above all, strange. She travelled the world to find them, and, hour by hour, week by week, the picture was growing older." This description evokes Chapter 11 of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, known as "the Huysmans chapter." During his 1895 trial, Oscar Wilde testified that the decadent "yellow backed novel" that Lord Henry Wotton gives to Dorian Gray is based in part on a scandalous French novel by Joris-Karl Huysmans, *A Rebours* (*Against the Grain* or *Against Nature*), published in 1884. Huysmans's hero, the Duc Jean Des Esseintes, so enervates himself in his pursuit of ambisexual sensual pleasures that he considers suicide, but instead retreats to an isolated country house, Fontenay, where he obsessively studies home decoration, perfumes, Latin literature, gems, liqueurs, the effects of colors on human emotions, and all sorts of other arcane subjects that Huysmans describes in minute detail, with torrents of purple prose. Wilde pays amused but affectionate homage to Huysmans by taking Dorian Gray on a similar pilgrimage of the senses in Chapter 11.

Inevitably, Sofia, on her way to Paris, visits Dorian (who wears a sleazy, silky, turquoise brocade kimono—what is it with bad girls and kimonos?) and tries to reason with her about "all these stories." In a cold, cruel voice, Dorian says, "You are the one person in the world entitled to know everything about me. You had more to do with it than you think. You made it. Now watch it!" And with that, Dorian runs the screen test.

The Dorian in the screen test has gone all witchy, with rotted teeth and a distorted voice. Horrified, Sofia asks Dorian to give back the screen test (Why? For *AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS?*), but Dorian refuses. Brandishing a sharp letter opener, Dorian threatens Sofia. "That is mine. If anything happens to that, something terrible happens to me. I know it. I can feel it." Sofia demands, "Give it to me!" As Sofia lunges forward, Dorian gives it to her, all right—in the chest with the letter opener! (Unlike most versions of the story, *SINS* gives the audience a

graphic view of Dorian's victim, the knife sticking out of the body as it lies dead on the floor.)

Briefly dismayed, Dorian quickly moves to protect herself. She goes to the studio, where Alan Campbell endlessly shoots and develops the pictures of Dorian Gray. She wants him to bring some photographer's gear to her apartment, hide the corpse in one of the cases (!), and get rid of it. ("She saw me! She saw what's inside me!") Alan, who hasn't photographed anyone but Dorian in years, knows he's nothing without her and, after a few hems and haws, agrees. (This plot device is considerably less plausible than the Wilde original, in which Alan is a doctor and uses his medical skills to "dismantle" Basil Hallward's body and dispose of it. All Dorian seems to require here is someone with a large suitcase!)

Some time later, it's party time again at Dorian's. Watching a horror movie with some sinister-looking friends, Dorian inadvertently stabs her hand with a corkscrew. She doesn't bother much about the wound, which heals unnaturally fast. (This is a new one on Wilde. Previous Dorians all retain their youthful looks and are immune to disease, but they're not immortal and hardly indestructible.) Alan Campbell crashes the party and demands \$100,000 in blackmail.

The next night, Dorian takes a briefcase with the blackmail money to the studio. In another blurring of genders, she wears her enormous white fur over a masculine suit, with a shirt and tie.) A man, stalking her through the nighttime streets, draws a pistol with a silencer, but doesn't interfere. In the studio, a drunken Alan tells her to put the money on a stool. With rock music blaring and flashbulbs popping crazily, he calls her a murderess and says, "You don't feel nothin', do you?" She rails, "Turn the music off!" Instantly, the music shuts off. Alan stands there with his bottle. He reaches out and smears Dorian's makeup. He says, "Now, that's a picture I've always wanted to take. Dorian Gray. She's just paint." (Her own, living face has become nothing but another commercial, a portrait of Dorian "painted" with the makeup she advertises.) Dorian slaps Alan and walks out, only to be replaced by the mystery man, who shoots Alan dead and steals the briefcase full of money. This man, who never shows his face and is never



*Continued on page 59*





# Dorian Meets Mabuse

## The Image of Dorian Gray in the Yellow Press

by David Kalat

*"We shall create a person. Gentlemen, Dorian Gray, a beautiful and somewhat dull and inexperienced young man, is to be our creation! Naturally, without his knowledge or consent. Young, rich, beautiful—we shall build him up, seduce him, annihilate him!"*

—Dr. Mabuse

**D**r. Mabuse has a problem. She is the head of a major multinational media empire, one of the richest and most influential people in the world. Her tabloid papers and tawdry magazines are top sellers across the globe. But profits simply are not growing fast enough for her. How tedious and wasteful it is to pay reporters and photographers to seek out the scandals and celebrity-tinted sensationalism needed to keep her printing presses engaged. How much more efficient and elegant it would be to manufacture the scandals from the outset, by manipulating the life of a celebrity of her own making.

Ah, there's the answer! And what a ready-made victim she has found in Dorian Gray, a vapid pretty boy, a worthless fop, a self-absorbed upper-class twit of the year unable to comprehend how he has become Mabuse's puppet. Everything that Dorian Gray experiences will be observed, catalogued, and recorded by Mabuse's minions. From this day forth, Dorian Gray's world is thoroughly tricked out with bugs and hidden cameras. Every detail of his life is foreordained by Mabuse, according to the dictates of the tabloid marketplace.

As she presents code-name Operation Mirror to the editors of her many papers, the yes-men nod in submissive approval—that is, save for one lone voice of dissent: The Little Doctor, scrupulous editor of *Der Spiegelwelt*. While the other editors in Mabuse's employ have long ago sold their souls, locked in a desperate and degrading chase after lurid sensationalism, this ethical, principled, intelligent man still believes that the business of newspapers is to inform the public about important and complex issues. Confronted with Mabuse's plan to corrupt and ul-

timately destroy an innocent man's soul merely to exploit it as a living soap opera, the Little Doctor decrees the whole idea abhorrent.

It will be some time before the Little Doctor discovers Mabuse's weakness and seizes a weapon by which to effect his defiance of this abomination. And by then it may well be too late....

German filmmaker Ulrike Ottinger's *DORIAN GRAY IM SPIEGEL DER BOULEVARDPRESSE* (THE IMAGE OF DORIAN GRAY IN THE YELLOW PRESS, 1984) is a strange beast. Aggressively avant-garde, off-putting in the extreme, unpredictable and mystifying, this motion picture owes precious little to Oscar Wilde's notorious novel; in this version, the picture that keeps Dorian Gray alive is not a supernatural portrait of Gray, but a photograph of Dr. Mabuse, the German horror icon and master criminal made famous by Fritz Lang's classic thrillers. What is Dr. Mabuse doing in a film about Dorian Gray? That is, of course, the question.

This particular Dr. Mabuse is a vampish, bitchy, drag-queen cool femme fatale played by the late, great Delphine Seyrig (think Joan Crawford playing Rupert Murdoch). Frau Dr. Mabuse is the true centerpiece of the picture, despite the title. She is a pill-popping control freak who carries on multiple conversations at once, in several different languages, while barking commands to her underlings through the microphones woven into the very fabric of her outrageous clothes. Coming from a filmmaker such as Ottinger, whose works are driven by a highly-charged, woman-positive, often lesbian aesthetic, such images of female transgression and power are only to be expected.

Ulrike Ottinger is essentially a cinematic collage artist. She does not adapt literary sources into films so much as she appropriates familiar characters and story elements to recombine in her own original ways, with ironic and unexpected juxtapositions. Critic Laura Pierce described Ottinger's films as "short on plot but filled with allegorical and political references that would boggle any semi-otician." Her cinema is densely packed with all manner of cultural references: fairy tales, famous literature (both classic and pulp), cinematic forms, and historical figures all stirred up in one big pot.

In the case of *Dorian Gray*, Ottinger is making an acerbic commentary on mass media, sampling characters and ideas from the Mabuse films and Wilde's novel. Despite the names of the two main characters, we cannot view this as an adaptation in the commonly accepted sense of the word.

Oscar Wilde's 1891 novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* scandalized Victorian society twice over. The story concerns a vapid youth, Dorian Gray, who has astonishing physical beauty, but a personality that is something of a blank slate. His two closest friends write much of themselves on that slate: Lord Henry Wotton, an obvious stand-in for Wilde himself, indoctrinates the pretty boy with his own poisonous philosophy, all selfishness and



hedonism. Meanwhile, artist Basil Hallward is madly in love with Dorian—a homosexual love—and paints Dorian's portrait to express all his pent-up passions. Somehow the portrait has a supernatural link to Dorian's soul. Dorian never ages—his picture, hidden away in a secret room, bears the burdens of age on his behalf. Moreover, the portrait reveals visually the ugliness of Dorian's inner self. While his "real" self continues in perpetual youth and resplendence, his tawdry sins and venal crimes, the products of Lord Henry's evil philosophy, etch themselves into his painting.

Wilde deliberately concocted Dorian Gray as a metaphor for the hypocrisy of Victoriana, a culture that prized appearance over substance at every turn. No one suspects Dorian's cruelty, because he looks good.

"Even those who had heard the most evil things against him, and from time to time strange rumors about his mode of life crept through London and became the chatter of the clubs, could not believe anything to his dishonour when they saw him."

It was Wilde's own homosexuality, and the scarcely concealed homoerotic content of the book, that created the real brouhaha. Wilde was tried for his sexual orientation, and sentenced to prison for his so-called crime. The proceedings provided the 19th-century equivalent of the O.J. Simpson trial. Thereafter, the pejorative "Cult of Wilde" was coined to refer to homosexuals, and Wilde's novel became a touchstone by which social outcasts could easily identify kindred spirits.

Ulrike Ottinger is one of those kindred spirits. In her inscrutable avant-garde take on *Dorian Gray*, she has preserved much of Wilde's subtext: an obsession with style over substance, Dorian's corruption concealed by a pretty face, homosexual overtones, and even the doppelgänger portrait—albeit, substantially transformed. The plot of her film, such as it is, is difficult to summarize:

Dr. Mabuse (Delphine Seyrig) approaches Dorian Gray (model Veruschka von Lehndorff, crossdressing to play a man) with a proposition. She wants to publish Dorian's life story in serial form in her papers. The young man is surprised, since his wealthy playboy lifestyle is actually quite dull. In her seductive, manipulative fashion, Mabuse steamrolls over Dorian's opposition, and invites him to the premiere of a new, modern opera.

The opera stars the beautiful (and mostly nude) Andamana (Tabea Blumenschein, Ottinger's ex-lover and recurring star). Dorian promptly falls in love with Andamana, oblivious to the fact that Mabuse's agents have previously employed the actress in Operation Mirror. Dorian's romantic turmoil with Andamana will provide the scandal she craves. (It parallels the doomed love affair between Dorian Gray and actress Sybil Vane in Wilde's original version.)

If Dorian were only paying attention, he'd see his current predicament reflected back at him through the opera, in which Seyrig and von Lehndorff play dual roles. Dorian's operatic double, the Lucky Prince of Spain, falls in

love with the amazonlike savage queen Andamana. Appropriately, Mabuse's alter ego is the Grand Inquisitor, who invades Andamana's island, slays the warrior queen, and enslaves the Lucky Prince for his having fallen behind on paying his taxes. Both on and off the stage, Mabuse's various personae have an exclusively mercenary interest in Dorian's fate.

The fact that Dorian, in the audience, completely misses the portentous content of the opera (and at no time remarks on seeing his and Mabuse's doppelgängers on stage) may, to conventional eyes, seem a hole in the story. Ottinger the filmmaker is contemptuous of the narrative experience and principally concerned with the striking visuals she can build around her loose narrative structures. The opera, which consumes fully 30 minutes of the film's

endurance-testing two and a half hours, is allegorical, not literal. The unexplained and unacknowledged duplication of Mabuse and Dorian in the opera presents by far the most obvious and recognizable Dorian Gray doppelgänger, but of the many mirror images Ottinger has inserted into the film it is the most superficial.

Curiously, the opera device harks back to the 1962 Dr. Mabuse film *THE INVISIBLE DR. MABUSE* (also known as *THE INVISIBLE HORROR*) by director Harald Reinl. In that film, Mabuse's machinations and the heroine's plight are symbolically portrayed in an operetta that the characters attend. However, whether Ottinger intended any homage or whether this parallel is merely an amusing coincidence is a matter for speculation.

Mabuse takes Dorian along to the press ball celebrating the opening of the opera. At this event, everything—the walls, the glasses of champagne, the waiters' clothes—are draped in newspaper. And what luck—Dorian meets up with Andamana! As Mabuse watches with satisfaction, Dorian walks blithely into her trap.

While Mabuse's editors and their guests enjoy a punk cabaret backed by windup children's toys, Andamana admits to Dorian that her opera "is too crazy for the conservative audience. The staging and music are too avant-garde. I'm afraid it won't run very long." The two lovebirds skip out for a night on the town, end up in bed together, and discover every facet of their private, intimate evening splayed across every paper the next morning.

Operation Mirror is an unqualified success. That night, Mabuse ratchets her plan up a notch. She takes Dorian on a wild tour of Berlin's seedy underground, full of hedonism, sexual perversion, and drug abuse. Wilde's Dorian Gray becomes corrupted by what he does, but Ottinger's Dorian is utterly passive. This movie is not about what Dorian does, but what Dorian sees—and what Mabuse's readers see Dorian seeing. He silently follows Mabuse like a trained puppy until he has become nothing more than a spectator to his own existence.

Dorian was supposed to spend the evening with Andamana. Thanks to Mabuse, he has stood her up, and



Rudolph Klein-Rogge is perhaps the most familiar image of Dr. Mabuse. He's pictured here in the guise of "the old professor" in *DR. MABUSE, THE GAMBLER* (1922).





As we approach the year 2002, Oscar Wilde's immortal creation is still going strong. The latest in a long line of eternal beauties is soap stud Ethan Erickson, who stars in yet another modern retelling of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, titled simply **DORIAN** (2001).

#### THE PICTURES OF DORIAN GRAY

*Continued from page 56*

identified, isn't any of the characters the audience knows. Maybe he's just some miscellaneous thug looking for a random target of opportunity (a parallel to the way a hunter shoots James Vane by accident in Wilde's novel), but a likelier possibility is that Dorian's hired herself a hit man.

Leaving the studio, Dorian is confronted by Angela Vane, and we've come full circle to the film's beginning. Shaken, even a little remorseful, the exhausted Dorian confesses all to Henry, who is genuinely devastated by news of his wife's murder. Expecting the worst, Henry asks Dorian if she knows anything about Sophia's disappearance. Dorian cries, "I had no choice! I was protecting myself!" "So you murdered her?" Dorian says no, but Henry tells her to get out of town and never come back. "Pray, if you know how." (Henry is reduced here to spouting the sort of banal clichés that Wilde's Lord Henry—not to mention Wilde himself—would have openly mocked.)

Dorian begs and screams, but Henry walks out on her. What's a girl to do? Dorian knows—she leaves Manhattan, checks herself into a mountain convent somewhere in Europe, and spends the next decade praying and caring for sick children.

Dorian's return to New York in 1982 brings the story back to the scene following the opening credits, in which she and Henry meet again. Repentant and virginal in white, she still can't overcome Henry's pensive near-silence. On his way out, he leaves behind the expensive chocolates she brought him. Alone, Dorian locks the doors, takes the screen test out of her briefcase—and—for the first time in many years—watches it. She expects to see herself redeemed by years of good deeds. Instead, her image is more

decrepit and disgusting than ever, looking like something out of an EC horror comic. The screen-test Dorian, whose hand has begun to fester as a result of Dorian's accident with the corkscrew, now takes to writing its own dialogue. "Murderer!" it yells. "Murderer!" Driven beyond endurance, Dorian stabs her image in the chest.

In the hall, Henry and the elevator operator (Mark Duffy) hear a scream and break down the penthouse door. They find Dorian lying dead, with the letter knife in her heart. The screen test, on pause, shows the doppelgänger in a flirty pose, once again young and beautiful. Henry caresses the hand of the dead woman. Her hand now looks withered (like Ayesha's following her second immersion in the *Flame of Life*), but it's wearing Dorian's ring. (The business of the ring is taken from the last line of Wilde's novel: "It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was.")

**THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY** suffers somewhat from that distinctively tacky "made for TV" look, but the biggest problem is the music. Though Tony Mylam's direction is skillful enough, the music, sometimes melodramatic, sometimes sentimental, undercuts the mood at almost every turn. The soundtrack hasn't aged well enough to give the movie the patina of a delightful period piece. If it were mere wallpaper music, it wouldn't matter. That kind of music murmurs in the background of many successful movies. Unfortunately, this music is far forward, as though the producers were proud of it—not surprisingly, since producer Jules Bass wrote the lyrics.

Still, this is an admirable attempt to do something different with Wilde's story. The real villain of **THE SINS OF**

*Continued on page 72*



# EMPIRE OF THE IMAGINATION



## WHO MUST BE OBEYED

### PART THREE

by Lelia Loban

A Haggard novel, *The Sign of the Cross*, was one of the first to be adapted for the screen. In 1901, the silent film *The Sign of the Cross* (directed by James Williamson) was the first to be shown in a public place. It was a success, and it was followed by a number of other films. In 1911, the silent film *The Sign of the Cross* (directed by James Williamson) was the first to be shown in a public place. It was a success, and it was followed by a number of other films. In 1911, the silent film *The Sign of the Cross* (directed by James Williamson) was the first to be shown in a public place. It was a success, and it was followed by a number of other films.

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The Sign of the Cross was a success, and it was followed by a number of other films. In 1911, the silent film *The Sign of the Cross* (directed by James Williamson) was the first to be shown in a public place. It was a success, and it was followed by a number of other films. In 1911, the silent film *The Sign of the Cross* (directed by James Williamson) was the first to be shown in a public place. It was a success, and it was followed by a number of other films.

ingers faced by a woman kitchening, but provides her with numerous fashionable, well-fitting wardrobe changes, including cute little shoes that don't look made for walking. (If suddenly her magic shoes go flat, blisters.)

Mario Nascimbene wrote music for more than six dozen movies, beginning with *CAPTAIN DEMON* (1949) and including *ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.* (1951) and *WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH* (1970). Unfortunately, a poor interpretation of his theme music gets this movie off to an uncomfortable start, when a high-society pop singer (probably a woman) sings a song that is a bit like the opening of *"Ode to Billy Joe"*. (The song is a bit like the opening of *"Ode to Billy Joe"*.) Also, the musicist Tony Martin plays the role of the man who Nascimbene's good music is a bit like the opening of *"Ode to Billy Joe"*. (The song is a bit like the opening of *"Ode to Billy Joe"*.)

In a Mediterranean resort town (filmed in Monte Carlo), Carol goes to her bra and panties, and then to a vacation yacht. The yacht is owned by a rich, generous yacht owner (Colin Blakely and Jill Blalock). Carol tolerates her spaced-out behavior and embark toward North Africa.

When Carol gets bad business news in a telegram, she goes to the yacht. Dismayed, Carol obeys the owner's overheard, and swims toward







Just who does she think she is, anyway? Killikrates (John Richardson) thinks Carol (Olinka Berova) is the reincarnation of his beloved Ayesha, but he was never known for his brains. Could it really be his high priests playing magical mind games, or is it *THE VENGEANCE OF SHE* (1968)? **PREVIOUS PAGE:** Ursula Andress played *SHE* in the 1965 Hammer production, but declined to return for the sequel.

Africa. George tries to help fish her out, but dies of a heart attack. (Blakely would have a considerably larger role two years later, as Dr. John H. Watson in Billy Wilder's *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*.) The widowed Sheila docks the boat somewhere on the coast of North Africa (the geography remains deliberately vague), and Carol compulsively heads south.

Carol's behavior has so intrigued one of the passengers, psychiatrist Philip Smith (Edward Judd, who turns in a sound though not memorable performance), that he enlists the help of the now out-of-work yacht captain, Harry (George Sewell), and follows her. Carol and her trackers, beset by various human and natural perils, finally team up as they cross the desert and near the mountain caves concealing the lost city of Kuma.

Philip tries to help Carol remember her own identity, but in Kuma, King Killikrates (Richardson) and his priests imprison Philip and try to brainwash Carol into believing that she's the reincarnation of Ayesha.

Hammer's 1965 *SHE* was set in 1918. After 50 years, Killikrates looks no older—and at first, he seems no wiser—than his former persona, Leo. This script demands less of John Richardson than the earlier movie did, since the character spends a high percentage of his screen time doing nothing but waiting, worrying, and looking handsome, as he listens to his priests bicker. Under the influence of Men-Hari, an ambitious magus (Derek Godfrey, convincingly Machiavellian in the role), Killikrates has grown arrogant and dictatorial, yet he's never completely lost Leo's gentler

nature. He's still obsessed with Ayesha, the love of his life, just as She was once obsessed with him.

The events of the previous movie destroyed or severely damaged Ayesha's ancient palace. The massive, masculine interior sets of Kuma in the reign of Kallikrates feature deep, warm, earthy tones, with lots of tapestries and candles. Killikrates governs a race of dark, Semitic-looking Caucasians. His priests claim to descend from the Chaldean Magi (familiar from the biblical story of the Three Wise Men). Where the earlier *SHE* set Haggard's story in the context of global political conflict, *THE VENGEANCE OF SHE* focuses more on that other chronic social problem, religion, with the factional struggle inside Kuma's priesthood.

Much of the credit for the coherency of this subplot belongs to the ritual sequence's designer, Andrew Low, who had worked as a researcher on *SHE*. The conflict resembles the schism in a real-life Victorian sect, the Order of the Golden Dawn, founded by an Englishman, MacGregor Mathers (a Rosicrucian). The early members of the Order included Arthur Edward Waite (studying mysticism of many cultures in an attempt to find the common ground between all religions), the poet William Butler Yeats, and Aleister Crowley (exploring sex magic and Satanism). They all pretended to take their inspiration from ancient, occult sources, but almost immediately, personality conflicts and power struggles broke out. The original order soon split up into competing secret societies, some of which survive today. Waite's ideas still influence modern neoPaganism as well as Christian mysticism.





**LEFT:** Hounded by half-naked children as though she were Sebastian Venable, Carol wanders foreign soil in search of her true identity. Is she really She, or is Ayesha just a dream? **RIGHT:** Just another dizzy queen—Carol ascends the throne in the Lost City of Kuma. **PAGE 63:** Without doubt, the most formidable She Who Must Be Obeyed is the redoubtable Hilda Rumpole (Marion Mathie), the domineering wife of **RUMPOLE OF THE BAILEY**.

In *THE VENGEANCE OF SHE*, an elderly Magus (William Lyon Brown) huddles in the background, scowling in silent disapproval. He seems to embody Mathers's defense of the ancient mysteries long misunderstood, perverted, and forgotten. Meanwhile, a solitary psychic, Kassim (veteran actor Andre Morell, who turns in one of the film's best performances) lives in the desert on the road to Kuma. Following a magician's path similar to the teachings of Waite, Kassim befriends Carol and tries to call on powers of Light to put a protective spell on her, to block Men-Hari's psychic control. On his roof, under the stars, Kassim draws a magic pentacle (a circle enclosing a five-pointed star) and chants in an ancient language.

The pentacle and the incomprehensible foreign language signal that Kassim will lose this fight. If he appealed to the power of Light in plain English, he'd sound like a Christian, Moslem, or Jew. That God is saved for the film's climax. Instead, Kassim looks more like a well-intentioned Pagan, one who's no match for a devil-worshipper. Though he never articulates the Pagan credo, Kassim seems to live by it: "An it harm no one, do as thou wilt." Good Pagans must respect the free will of others, while accepting personal responsibility for their own actions.

Men-Hari, Kassim's opponent, resembles Aleister Crowley, who founded the "Thoth" splinter group that quit Waite's Golden Dawn to practice Satanism and sex magic. By hijacking Carol's body and passing her off as the reincarnation of Ayesha, Men-Hari hopes to con Killikrates into giving him immortality as a reward. Men-Hari's pentacle is a grand, professional (materialistic) affair, permanently laid out in gold on the marble floor of the palace. His tools include a serpent staff, symbolic of medical power and masculinity, but also of evil. Men-Hari calls on "the supreme Prince of Darkness" and on "the angels of darkness" to fetch Elementals of earth, air, fire, and water. Since Men-Hari deals with dark powers that will destroy him if they detect weakness, he throws flash powder (saltpeter) in his incense burner to make a big noisy impression, and utters, not a polite request for help, but a belligerent demand: "I command! I command! I command!" The spell works. The Elementals form a tornado that knocks Kassim out of his sacred circle. He falls over the wall of the roof to his death.

Once Carol reaches Kuma, Men-Hari keeps her hypnotized. He plans to control her, as the power behind her

throne. The only human rights and individual freedoms that mean anything to him are his own. Though he never speaks Crowley's Satanic credo, Men-Hari behaves as though he believes in it: "Do as thou wilt shall be the whole of the law." Men-Hari's ethical adversary, the priest Za-Tor (Noel Willman, with another good performance), foments a slave rebellion against the dictatorial rule of Men-Hari and Killikrates.

As the civil war begins and Killikrates prepares to enter the sacred flame with Carol, Philip escapes, finds the shrine where the flame of life rises from a huge crystal, and tries to stop the ceremony. Carol is willing to go into the flame until Philip's frantic jabbering about her nightmares and the murder of Kassim scares her out of her trance. (Why does Men-Hari let Philip keep talking?) When Killikrates invites Men-Hari to enter the flame of life with Ayesha, Philip argues, "You're a fool, Killikrates. Ayesha has not been reborn. Can't you see? Men-Hari found her in the world outside and brought her to you, but only so you'd give him immortality." Men-Hari denies this charge, but good priest Za-Tor finally convinces Killikrates that Men-Hari "desires immortality so that he might conquer the world. This is why he would sacrifice his soul."

With Carol now afraid of him and unwilling to enter the flame, Killikrates reverts to the gentler Leo side of his nature and orders the guards to let Carol and Philip go free. Mayhem ensues as the enraged Men-Hari stabs Za-Tor. Killikrates orders his guards to kill Men-Hari. Despondent over the collapse of his dreams, Killikrates commits suicide by walking into the sacred flame for the fatal second time. Like She, he turns into a mummy, then crumbles as he dies—a puzzling development, since Leo, a young man when he achieved immortality in 1918, would be less than seventy-five years old in the late 1960s. Apparently, some sort of transubstantiation has given his human body the physical attributes of the original, 2000-year-old Killikrates, or the sacred flame automatically mummifies on second exposure, or . . . ahem, maybe this part of the story doesn't make any sense. The dying Za-Tor never calls himself a Christian, but instead of performing a ritual with a pentacle or other Pagan trappings, he gazes heavenward and prays directly for divine intervention: "Prince of Light, I beseech thee, destroy this city of iniquity, which in its pride and folly has taken the dark path; and cleanse thy people who



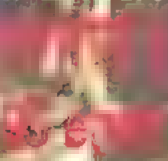
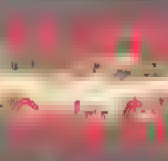
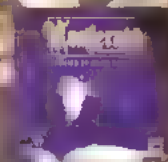




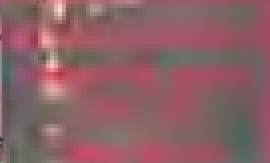
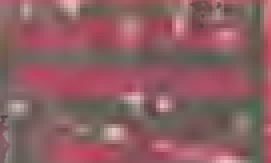
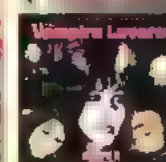
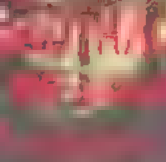
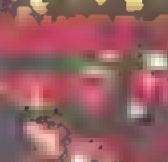
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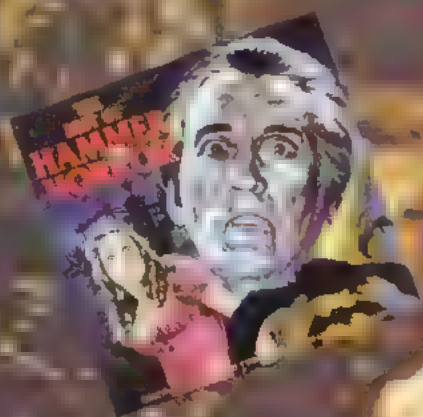
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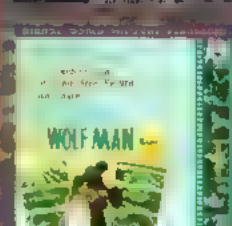
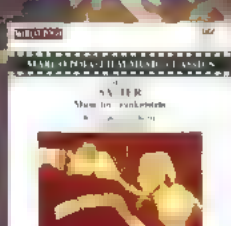
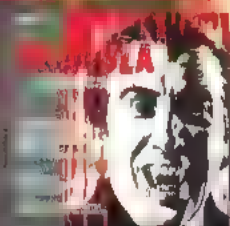


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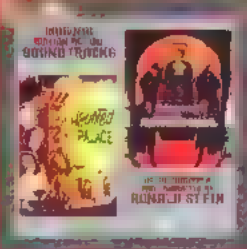


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Collectively, they cut-strip the plot down to a bare, prolonged chase scene. The 90-minute version significantly alters the character of Dick. In the original, as well as the book, he is a dick, unpleasantly juvenile. Speaking in a flat, blatantly sophomoric dialogue and crude behavior toward women makes him a more sympathetic character and emphasizes that Tom, Dick, and Hari come from a different world than the one they must survive to complete

## totally forgettable

[illegible][illegible]

slaves women. The female-dominated Urechs do the same to men. Armed monks, evil knights who decorate their

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Occipital

1. The first step is to identify the key components of the system. This involves understanding the hardware, software, and data involved. For example, in a web application, the components might include the server, the database, and the client browser.

short version omits an important scene in which Park (An  
d  
had a lot of laboratory apparatus, finds Tom after the  
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who the Nerks are or what they want.)

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assailants who leap out of packing crates (one of them

style fights. Her best opponent, a mechanical Franken-

Ritually defeating these cartoonlike opponents earns her the right to appear before the aforementioned Moon the sybil of a sacred grove, who certifies Sha's *ensueño*.





**LEFT:** Timewise, John Richardson really got around in his movies. In addition to the SHE films, he was Tumak in Hammer's ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. (1966) and a Regency rake opposite Barbra Streisand in the epoch-hopping reincarnation musical ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE FOREVER (1970, pictured). **MIDDLE:** Killikrates, reincarnated as Leo Vincey (Richardson), is granted immortality by Ayesha (Ursula Andress) in SHE, only to be abandoned when She dies. **BOTTOM:** In THE VENGEANCE OF SHE, the former Leo pins his hopes on reincarnation in the form of the lovely Carol (Olinka Berova).

combat and permits her to bathe in the sacred pool (not flame) that extends her life, youth, and abnormal strength for another year. (The pool scene, with its discreet nudity, also completely disappears from the 90-minute version, with the result that the warehouse fight makes no sense and nobody ever explains that She enjoys supernaturally prolonged youth!) Moona tells She, "The prophecy still stands. A man will come to claim your heart. You will break your vow." (What vow?) "Through him, you will be destroyed." That's the last of the vow and the prophecy, unless the viewer cares to interpret She in the last scene as "destroyed" in the sense of slang for "brokenhearted"—plausible, since the characters speak modern American slang throughout.

Tom rescues Dick from Taphir's pigpen (There's a touch of Hope/Crosby shenanigans to all this, what with our heroes being put in cages, as in 1941's ROAD TO ZANZIBAR, or selling each other into and out of slavery, as in 1942's ROAD TO MOROCCO.) The men kidnap She and try to force her to reveal the location of Nork Valley (the first time anyone's identified the Norks in the short version). Shanda swiftly pursues the kidnappers with an army of female soldiers.

Tom and Dick chain She up in an abandoned factory, but during the night, a mummylike mutant named Kram (Cyrus Elias) and his gang of followers capture the companions. For no logical reason, Kram tries to squish his captives to death, in what looks like a freight elevator, with walls that slowly press inward. Just in time, Shanda rides to the rescue. Shanda must solve the puzzles of the building's functioning electrical doors and other apparatus, to navigate the factory dungeon and save the captives. Unfortunately, Shanda's not big on intellectual finesse. Her solutions tend to involve bashing things, hard. Shanda liberates the crusher and the good guys wipe out the mutants.

Curious to see what Tom and Dick will do, She lets them go free and then follows them. The Road to Nork Valley takes Tom and Dick to a decadent castle, whose effete residents invite the travellers to a formal dinner dance, a bit like a high-school prom, complete with vintage pop music records. Late at night, revellers lie asleep all over the floor. Rumpled, loosened clothing hints of post-orgy exhaustion. Most people pair off boy with girl, but Tom lies contentedly close to the effeminate ruler of the castle, Pretty Boy (David



Brandon). The viewer who notices this pairing (it's not conspicuous, in the sardine-pack of bodies on the floor) might also notice that, in contrast to the aptly-named Dick, who leers at every woman he meets, Tom never shows the slightest sexual interest in any of the nubile female characters.

Pretty Boy and the other party animals awaken in the night and reveal their true natures with fangs bared. She and Shanda break into the castle just in time to rescue Tom and Dick from their vampire hosts. Now working together, the four questers must defeat Godan (Gregory Snegoff), a sadistic fascist dictator with a fondness for hammer-and-sickle decorations, who demands to be worshipped as a god.

One of the most perversely humorous moments (toned down in the short version) comes when Godan's goons chain Shanda to a wall and beat her. Meanwhile, Tom and Dick, keeping their freedom by pretending to worship Godan, try to eat dinner with the acolytes in a nearby room. As Tom and Dick uneasily push food around on their

plates and do their very best to pretend they're not listening, poor Shanda screams in rhythm, "No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No!" (The entire quote would run to quite a few more repetitions!)

After escaping from Godan, our heroes must defeat mad

*Continued on page 74*







# Flesh and Fantasies The New Erotic Thrillers

by Kevin G. Shinnick and Drew Sullivan

**M**otivation? How about "Hot lesbian sex ensues." That's not your typical script direction, unless it's a script from the successful *EI* Independent Cinema. *EI* (which stands for Exposure Index, an ASA film rating) began in 1986 when a group of college friends (led by the amiable Mike Raso) began shooting shorts and features. Their first break came when filmmaker David DeCoteau

involved them in the making of *GHOUL SCHOOL* (1990), a zombie comedy starring Joe Franklin.

Unfortunately, *GHOUL SCHOOL* proved less than a runaway hit, and Raso went back to his day job producing commercials. Come night, however, he and his pals made movies for a local cable showcase (Some of this early work can be seen in the special features on the DVD of 1999's *TITANIC 2000*, which features *Scarlet Street*'s own Michael R. Thomas as Egor.) In 1994, *EI* began to distribute a 40-minute

short called *CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE*, which originally was made for convention showings at the height of the modern scream queen craze. The film proved so popular that it was fleshed out in 1996 with new scenes starring cult favorite Moe Noodleman. (Like Mike Thomas, Moe, using a painfully phony alias, is a *Scarlet Street* contributor of long standing.) Directed by Frank Terranova, *CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE* remains one of the most popular titles in the *EI* catalog.

With *CARESS* in its corner, *EI* set up a video distribution label. The timing was bad, though, since many independents were folding. Still, *EI* persevered, acquiring product from outside producers and releasing it under the *EI* label. Then came *EI*'s first in-house production—*VAMPIRE SEDUCTION* (1997), starring Tina Krause.

Mike Raso, Jeff Fauro, and Zachary Snygg make up the *EI* team. "Others have come and gone, and a lot of freelancers work with us, but that's the core team," says Raso. Their films, shot on high-quality video equipment, often contain horror elements and a lot of Sapphic love-making, the better to attractive the heterosexual males who make up the company's core audience. The films are titillating, but Raso has no interest in producing hardcore pornography. "Adult production is a separate industry, and that doesn't interest us. Mostly, we're horror fans."

The typical *EI* film budget is approximately \$50,000. Costs are kept down by using the same crew as often as

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# Flesh and Fantasies

## The New Erotic Thrillers

by Kevin G. Shinnick and Drew Sullivan

**M**otivation? How about "Hot lesbian sex ensues." That's not your typical script direction, unless it's a script from the successful EI Independent Cinema. EI (which stands for Exposure Index, an ASA film rating) began in 1986 when a group of college friends (led by the amiable Mike Raso) began shooting shorts and features. Their first break came when filmmaker David DeCoteau

involved them in the making of *GHOUL SCHOOL* (1990), a zombie comedy starring Joe Franklin.

Unfortunately, *GHOUL SCHOOL* proved less than a runaway hit, and Raso went back to his day job producing commercials. Come night, however, he and his pals made movies for a local cable showcase. (Some of this early work can be seen in the special features on the DVD of 1999's *TITANIC 2000*, which features *Scarlet Street*'s own Michael R. Thomas as Eegor.) In 1994, EI began to distribute a 40-minute

short called *CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE*, which originally was made for convention showings at the height of the modern scream queen craze. The film proved so popular that it was fleshed out in 1996 with new scenes starring cult favorite Moe Noodleman. (Like Mike Thomas, Moe, using a painfully phony alias, is a *Scarlet Street* contributor of long standing.) Directed by Frank Terranova, *CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE* remains one of the most popular titles in the EI catalog.

With *CARESS* in its corner, EI set up a video distribution label. The timing was bad, though, since many independents were folding. Still, EI persevered, acquiring product from outside producers and releasing it under the EI label. Then came EI's first in-house production—*VAMPIRE SEDUCTION* (1997), starring Tina Krause.

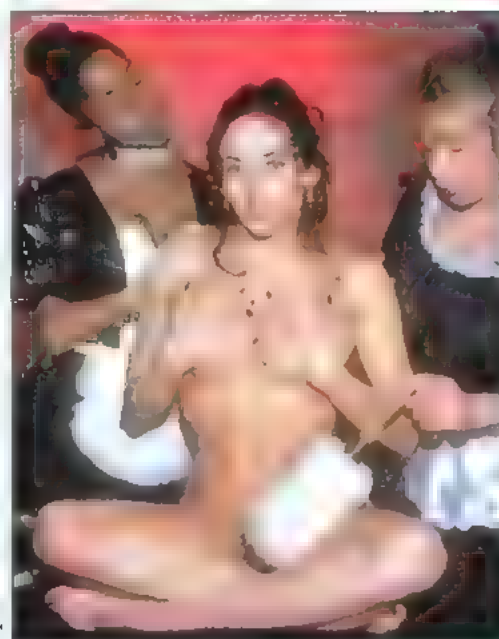
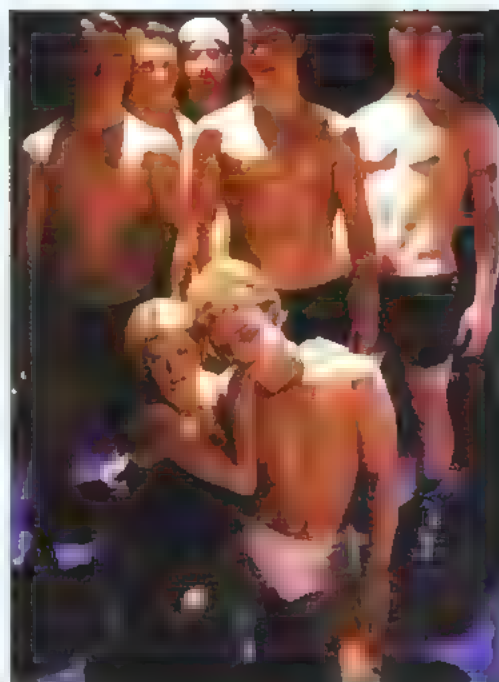
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# BOOK ENDS

## The Scarlet Street Review of

### THE ALFRED HITCHCOCK STORY

Ken Mogg

Titan Books, 1999

192 pages—£29.99

Taylor Publishing Company, 2000

211 pages—\$29.95

In Alfred Hitchcock's *THE WRONG MAN* (1956), Manny Balestrero (Henry Fonda) is accused of committing a crime perpetrated by someone else, and finds himself pucked from his calm, well-ordered existence and plunged into a nightmare of mistaken identity. Manny is the Wrong Manny, a recurring theme of the Master of Suspense. Hitchcock enthusiasts are hereby warned not to buy the Wrong Book—because there are two separate editions of Ken Mogg's *The Alfred Hitchcock Story*, one published in Great Britain by Titan Books, the other in the USA by Taylor Publishing. Superficially, the twin tomes look somewhat alike (as does poor Manny and the real criminal), but only the British edition is the genuine article.

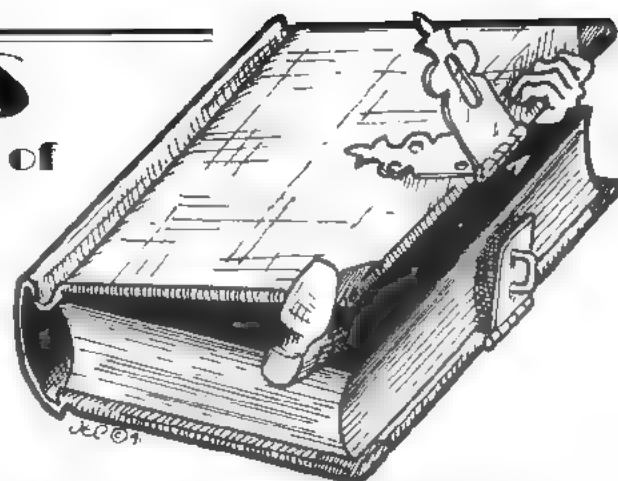
Ken Mogg is an acknowledged Hitchcock expert and publisher of the excellent, scholarly journal *The MacGuffin*. Years of effort have gone into *The Alfred Hitchcock Story*, and the author himself has publicly decried the American version of his book, which he claims has been "simplified and modified." He's right, but that's only the half of it. The layout is duller, the illustrations smaller. In many instances, Mogg's text (and that of contributors Dan Auiler, David Barracough, Steven L. DeRosa, Philip Kemp, J. Lary Kuhns, and *Scarlet Street* contributor Martin Grams Jr.) has been drastically cut, and the number of photographs reduced as well. (Those color photos and poster reproductions that remain are often printed in black-and-white.) Accompanying Janet Leigh's fine Foreword in

the British version is a full page picture of the actress and costar John Gavin in *PSYCHO* (1960). Accompanying the Foreword in the American version is a blank page. Nothing. Just white. Not even fork tracks.

*The Alfred Hitchcock Story* (the remainder of this review refers only to the Titan edition) is a beautifully designed book, covering every last one of the Master's films in vivid detail and offering side bar rully as fascinating as the main text. (The topics covered include Gainsborough Pictures, where Hitch made many of his British classics, remakes of Hitchcock's films by directors other than Hitchcock; cut scenes; alternate versions; even "the lady buying the pesticide" in *PSYCHO*.) Additional sections cover a plethora of Hitchcock material: his TV and radio shows, his cameo appearances, the Hitchcock Blonde, famous locations, short story anthologies, everything but the kitchen sink (and even that would be here had somebody been murdered in it.)

There have been more books written about Alfred Hitchcock than any other director—deservedly so—and it's sometimes tempting to cry, "Enough! I've got enough!" You'll be making a big mistake if you do, though, bigger than those cops who arrested Manny Balestrero for a robbery he didn't commit. Don't let *The Alfred Hitchcock Story* be the Book That Got Away.

—Richard Valley



rors 3: Dr. Turner's House of Horrors had already been completed.

As with all good collaborations, it's not easy to tell where Turner's writing stops and Price's begins. The Turner and Price style of sardonic wit is sprinkled throughout the book, making for a tasty experience unlike standard bland academic movie reference books. They're born writers, and they know to make every word count—important in a jam-packed reference book such as this, with so much ground to cover. Some films only rate a paragraph or so, while others are more thoroughly described. *FH2*'s scope is quite broad. It includes almost every kind of unusual Poverty Row film, from the typical Hollywood independent companies (Monogram and PRC), to films made for ethnic audiences, to an intriguing group of amateur but impressive films done by grade-school kids in Texas, who produced their own versions of *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* and *FRANKENSTEIN*. Rare interviews by the likes of Boris Karloff, Roy Rogers, producer Sam Katzman, and character actors Angelo Rossitto are additional ingredients in this wonderfully exotic literary dish.

*Forgotten Horrors 2: Beyond the Horror Ban* is a worthy addition to any film fan's library. It's a real page Turner and the Price is right!

—Leonard J. Kohl

### FORGOTTEN HORRORS/ FORGOTTEN HORRORS 2

Michael H. Price and George E. Turner

Midnight Marquee Press, Inc., 2001

256 pages—\$20.00

In these days when we're paying more, but getting less, how refreshing that the folks at Midnight Marquee Press have given fans of *Forgotten Horrors* (1979, improved and republished in 2001) their money's worth with this long-awaited sequel, *Forgotten Horrors 2: Beyond the Horror Ban*. The book is packed with rare photographs—all superbly reproduced—and brisk, efficient essays on little-known horror, sci-fi, Gothic Western, and just plain weird low budget independent films. It's the stuff that fans of the late George E. Turner and Michael H. Price have come to expect.

The book covers the colorful years of 1936 through 1942, from the horror ban of the late thirties to the second wave of movies about "things that go bump in the night." Turner saw the completed version of what became "the definitive version" of *Forgotten Horrors* before he passed away in 1998. Fortunately for fans, much of his work on the manuscript of *Forgotten Horrors 2* and the upcoming *Forgotten Hor*

### AN ACTOR AND A RARE ONE

Tony Earnshaw

Scarecrow Press, 2001

146 pages—\$26.50

*An Actor and a Rare One* is part of a comment made about consulting detective Sherlock Holmes by Scotland Yard Inspector Athelney Jones in Arthur Conan Doyle's 1890 novel *The Sign of Four*—but even the rarest of actors doesn't always get rave reviews. The performances of that rare actor, Peter Cushing, as that rare actor, Sherlock Holmes, have elicited strong reactions over the years, both pro and con. In this book, Tony Earnshaw endeavors to give us the most detailed examination possible of Cushing's work as Holmes. Unfortunately, many of the actor's performances (30 times as the Great Detective, if one counts his 13 Audio books for the deaf) are unavailable for reappraisal, some television programs even rumored to have been erased by the

Mrs. Bates plays peek a boo!





BBC! Earnshaw fills readers in on these lost shows by interviewing several people involved with the productions, and quoting reviews of the shows.

Earnshaw does his utmost to give readers a sense of Cushing's portrayal, beginning with the actor's appearance in Hammer's *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* (1959). He doesn't entirely succeed, since a lack of available material forces him to skim over some of the BBC episodes, but he still manages to relate some amusing behind-the-scenes stories concerning the almost complete disorganization of the series. The most successful section of the book is its coverage of *THE MASKS OF DEATH* (1984), which marked the last time Cushing—playing an elderly Sherlock coming out of retirement on the brink of the First World War—stepped before the camera as Holmes (A planned sequel, *THE ABBOT'S CRY*—which is not, by the way, "Hey, Abbott"—was never made.)

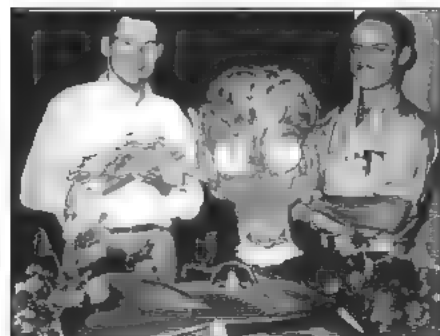
An Actor and a Rare One may well turn out to be the sole book to concentrate only on this particular aspect of the Gentle Man of Horror's career, so it's definitely worth getting, for fans of Peter Cushing and Sherlock Holmes alike.

—Kevin G. Shinnick

#### IT CAME FROM BOB'S BASEMENT

Bob Burns & John Michlig  
Chronicle Books, 2000  
144 pages—\$24.95

So you think you have a great memorabilia collection? Not like the one in Bob's basement, you don't! Outside of *Scarlet Street*'s own Forrest J Ackerman, Bob Burns has one of the greatest sci fi/horror



Bob Burns and Paul Blaisdell pose with the props created by Blaisdell for AIP's *INVASION OF THE SAUCER MEN* (1957). Bob's pal was sadly unappreciated during his lifetime

collections in the world! Also like Forry, Bob's a genuinely nice guy, and more than willing to share the treasures of his collection with his few fans. He's a pleasure to talk to—and if that isn't possible, well, reading this book is the next best thing.

*It Came From Bob's Basement* is chock full of killer photos of his collection, coupled with an entertaining, highly readable text by Burns and cowriter John Michlig, filled with fascinating anecdotes about Bob's many encounters with the Men Who Made the Monsters. You'll see and read all about the fully-restored titular mechanism from *THE TIME MACHINE*

(1960), the boots worn by Glenn Strange in *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948), a genuine metal armature from *KING KONG* (1933), the costumes worn in *THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL* (1941) and *THE PURPLE MONSTER STRIKES* (1945), the silver-tipped cane from *THE WOLF MAN* (1941), the robot from *PHANTOM EMPIRE* (1935), Ro-Man's helmet from *ROBOT MONSTER* (1953), and much, much, much more.

There are surprises in the text, including the story of Bob's friendship with AIP monster maker Paul Blaisdell (1956's *IT CONQUERED THE WORLD*) and how it was hurt by the way the film studios treated Blaisdell, and how 20th Century Fox simply dropped truckloads of props from *ALIEN* (1979) off at Bob's house (Lucky that Bob has such an understanding and supportive wife in Kathy Burns, who not only puts up with his hobby, but shares in its pleasures.) The stories about Bob's legendary Halloween events are a special treat.

*It Came From Bob's Basement*—and we're certainly glad it came our way!

—Kevin G. Shinnick

#### THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

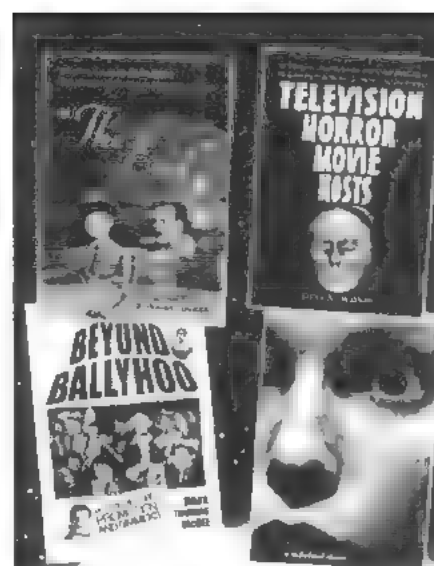
Roy Ward Baker  
Reynolds & Harn Ltd, 2000  
185 pages—\$35

During a long and distinguished career, Roy Ward Baker took part in the evolution of film, from the early sound era (beginning as a tea boy) to his comparatively recent (1992) television work.

That a man who has done so much should be so modest is astounding. It's also a little frustrating, however, since Ward writes just a little about each of his film projects, before quickly moving on to the next subject. When he does provide details of what it was like behind the scenes in the British Film Industry, it's a fascinating look, and serves to whet our appetite for further insights that, unfortunately, are never forthcoming. We get only so much and no more, even when the subject is *A NIGHT TO REMEMBER*, the classic 1958 film about the sinking of the Titanic (a title deserving an entire book to itself), or *DON'T BOTHER TO KNOCK* (1952), a film that put Marilyn Monroe firmly on the bumpy road to superstardom. Like so much else, the films that most interest readers of *Scarlet Street*, Baker's Hammer Horrors (1970's *SCARS OF DRACULA*, 1971's *DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE*, 1974's *LEGEND OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN VAMPIRES*), are barely touched upon.

*The Director's Cut* is most successful with its advice to filmmakers about the logistics of setting up a project, the importance of a talented crew of coworkers, the handling of talent, and the actual business of being a director. Those considering a career in filmmaking should study this book and take Baker's advice to heart—and Baker should take our advice and write another book with all the stories and anecdotes he left out of this one. It would make a perfect companion piece.

Kevin G. Shinnick



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Charles Derry

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Roy William Neill and dog direct Thurston Hall, Boris Karloff, and Marian Marsh in *THE BLACK ROOM* (1935).

## COLUMBIA HORRORS

*Continued from page 45*

Mrs. Schuyler (Nana Bryant) is skeptical of the entire business, suspecting that Blake might be shamming, but a polygraph test proves him not only to have no memory of his past, but shows him to be the most docile of men. This proof, however, raises another issue for Schuyler: "Assuming I've removed all his vicious traits, now what have I? A blank mind. After all, Rawley has to be stamped with new character. Now, he's just an animated lump of clay." Essentially, the concept (which looks forward to 1971's *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*) is the Frankenstein story in reverse. Unfortunately, *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE* doesn't entirely explore this theme and, at this point in the narrative, settles into a very entertaining, but scarcely horrific tale of Blake becoming a doctor and a model citizen, whose world comes crashing down when former girlfriend Peggy figures out his true identity.

All this is skillfully done. The plot contrivances are seamlessly interpolated into the film. The actors are uniformly excellent, including genre leading lady Marian Marsh in her last role in a film of this type. Bellamy, Bond, Robertson, and Hall (who would play another Schuyler, this one a bank president—on the fifties TV sitcom *TOPPER*) come off especially well. Many of the scenes are surprisingly moving, notably the scene in which Gloves learns his mother has died and kills both himself and Peggy in a car wreck to keep them from testifying against the redeemed gangster. Robertson's handling of the scene in which he arrests Blake ("I've been looking forward to this day for a long time. Now, it doesn't seem to mean so much") is probably the single most impressive moment of his long screen career.

Still, as a horror film, *THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE* gives up the ghost fairly early on, making Columbia close its first efforts at the horror genre on a tepid note. When horror movies made their comeback in 1939, the studio would finally get the chance to carve a major place for itself in the field.

To Be Continued....

## THE PICTURES OF DORIAN GRAY

*Continued from page 59*

*DORIAN GRAY* isn't a person, but the soul destroying process of turning a person into a public image, in whom synthetic glamour, stardom, celebrity, and phoniness displace genuine human character. The innovation of showing the portrait in the form of a screen test is an inspiration, and works remarkably well. Still, for sheer entertainment value, an abstract idea can't compete with a cynical, sardonically amusing sonofabitch—something Oscar Wilde, Albert Lewin, and George Sanders understood.

\*\*\*

It seems that the movies of Oscar Wilde's classic tale grow more revisionist with each new version. What's next? Well, there's never been an all animated *DORIAN GRAY*. Or a film musical. Or an out-and-out comedy spoof.

Actually, there's already a new *DORIAN* waiting in the wings, and—perhaps not surprisingly—it's yet another modern retelling. Filmed more than a year ago in Montreal, *DORIAN* was produced by Cinema 4 Films and directed by Allan Goldstein.

Ethan Erickson, whose television credits include several soap operas and *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER*, plays a beautiful young man named—no, not Dorian, but Louis. Malcolm McDowell plays the latest variation on Wilde's Lord Henry Wotton, here called Henry Wooten and described in press materials as the very devil himself. Wooten "methodically manipulates, dominates, and eventually converts wide-eyed innocent Louis into Dorian, a self-centered, self-indulgent, self-destructive, forever gorgeous, supermodel."

That's right, we're back in supermodel territory. It's *THE SINS OF DORIAN GRAY* all over again, this time beginning in the year 2000 and flashing back all the way to 1980, where, somehow, the audience will be expected to tell the self-centered, self-indulgent, self-destructive, forever gorgeous Dorian from all the other up-and-comers of the Reagan era.

Louis starts out as a photographer's assistant—Stuart Vane's job in *SINS*. He's "a simply beautiful young man with beautifully simple dreams," and then he meets Henry. Louis knows nothing about Henry, but Henry knows everything about Louis, and convinces him that "he's got the face of tomorrow, but only today to live for. Fame, fortune, and eternal youth could all be his, but at a price... his soul."

"Sexy, cool, and pulsating, this modern-day adaptation of Wilde's classic *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is the ultimate psycho drama."

Smile! It's time to take your picture....



Ethan Erickson and Victoria Sanchez in the not-yet-released *DORIAN*, the latest in the long line of dramatizations adapted from Oscar Wilde's famous novel.







LEFT: The eyes (well, one eye) and ears are added to the Face of Dorian Gray. CENTER: A layer of mortician's wax—how appropriate! RIGHT: Dick Smith has added "diseased growths" to show Dorian's degeneration during life.

## DICK SMITH

*Continued from page 53*

Next, I did the eyeballs—or the eyeball, I should say. I had an old plastic eyeball from when I was learning how to make them, and I took this horrible eyeball and flamed it—toasted it, so to speak—to make it look nasty. I tinted some mortician's wax blood-red and poured that into the empty eye socket. I modelled the teeth out of hard wax, then here and there I stuck on bits and pieces of some old hair pieces I had. That's basically it.

**SS:** It sounds so easy, but it makes quite an impression. What about the body, though?

**DS:** The dummy was a very simple contrivance. It was mainly a leotard stuffed with newspaper, anything that would

hold its shape. It didn't even have a skeletal frame. It was improvised on the set. Oh, yes, and I made some hands to sew onto it. I used something I already had and added lots of paper and latex to them, and put on very long fingernails. Then, I attached them to the arms. I remember taking some very large, long paper cups and forming the hands onto them, as though the cups were forearms and wrists. The cups were stuffed with something fairly rigid and tucked into the sleeves of the coat and taped to the stuffed underwear, so they'd hold their position and not flop around. I had those hands for the longest time. I used to use them on Halloween! (Laughs)

**SS:** Yes, when you didn't want to leave your own fingerprints!

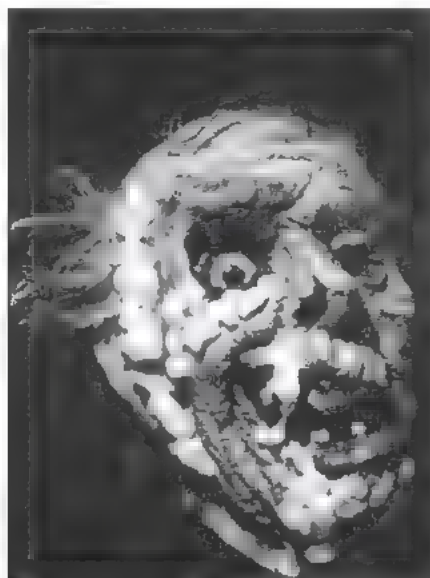
**DS:** That's about all there was to it, really. It wasn't a difficult assignment.

**SS:** That's how you accomplished the makeup, but how did you go about designing the particular look?

**DS:** I should say, perhaps, that the design was not entirely mine. The scenic artist who designed the sets provided the painting. Now this concept in the painting, I thought, was dreadful, but it did have these fatty bits sticking out. What I simply did was to take the basic shape of the thing, because obviously it had to conform to the final painting, and make it much more believable. I had to improve upon what the scenic artist had basically laid out. I have a picture of the original

*Continued on page 78*

LEFT: Clear plastic film is painted over the wax, texture is added to simulate rough skin, and the face is darkened to better bring out the decrepid details. CENTER: Dorian should've joined Hair Club for Men! A few strands are added to his mostly bald pate, and he gets fuzzy "old man" eyebrows. RIGHT: The head is attached to a dummy and positioned on the floor, exactly as it's seen in the closing moments of *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*. "I'm ready for my closeup, Mr. DeMille!"







She's not your average *She Who Must Be Obeyed*, but Hilda Rumpole (Peggy Thorpe-Bates) nevertheless rules husband Horace (Leo McKern) with an iron will.

## EMPIRE OF THE IMAGINATION

*Continued from page 67*

scientist Rabel (Donald Hodson) and his partner, Rudolph (Mario Pedone). Rudolph, a large man with a hairy chest and a beard, wears a ballet tutu with tights. Rabel and Rudolph live together in a laboratory in a plastic tent, where they collect and experiment on all sorts of things, including She, Dick, and Shanda in cages. This dungeon splits up the fellowship again. Tom, who has avoided capture by Rabel and Rudolf, heads toward Nork Valley alone. She and Dick travel together, while Shanda rides back to Urech for reinforcements.

The next obstacle is a standup comedian named Xenon (David Traxler), wearing a white wig, an eyepatch, and a sailor's uniform. To the beat of a military drum cadence, he guards the bridge to the Norks' city (a bombed-out former metropolis) by jumping in front of travellers and performing imitations! Xenon resembles the hydra. Chop off a piece of him and it immediately grows into a whole new Xenon. Eventually, eight Xenons obstruct Tom at the bridge by hopping about and imitating Groucho Marx, the Cowardly Lion from *THE WIZARD OF OZ* (1939), James Cagney, and The Three Stooges. (When Dick and She come along later, Xenon's singular again, the same way dungeon monsters in role-playing games appear in their original form for each new player.)

Defeating Xenon lets Tom enter the Norks' fortress town. Some of the Nork citizens ride skateboards. Nork costumes include Dracula outfits, kilts, Nazi uniforms, a United States flag—probably everything Nesher could scrounge from studio wardrobes, given the movie's low budget. The good guys hide in plain sight, masquerading as candidates for the Nork military service. Joining the service means surviving a gladiatorial free-for-all combat to the death. Unmasking in the arena near the end of this fight, the good guys recognize each other as the only survivors. Refusing to fight against each other, She, Tom, and Dick reunite to attack the Nork spectators and liberate Hari from the King of the Norks (an uncredited actor in a spacesuit). The fellowship stages a last battle against the pursuing Norks at Xenon's bridge. Dick decides to stay on this side of the river with Shanda. Warrior queen She falls for Tom, just as the Sybil has predicted, but Tom and his sister climb back on their barge to head home by themselves. They leave She standing disconsolately on the bank. Though it's a conventional, "riding off into the sunset" ending, the viewer who remembers how Tom fell asleep next to Pretty Boy understands that this hero doesn't get the girl because he's not interested in girls.

Gay caricatures as sidekicks abound in sword and sorcery movies, but gay protagonists as true heroes are almost

unknown. The movie underplays Tom's gayness without trying to hide it. It's just part of who he is, along with his blonde hair. Though Nestor fills the movie with in-jokes (most of them lame), they're never directed at Tom; and he's every bit the—well, the straight-man, the typically strong, stalwart, honorable, stoical hero, not the campy stereotype more typical of gay characters in comedies of the eighties.

## Concluded Next Issue

### DORIAN MEETS MABUSE

*Continued from page 58*

the debauchery of his evening's activities are indiscreetly reported in the morning editions. When Dorian tries to make up with her, Mabuse's secret army of reporters and photographers sate themselves on the lovers' spat. Of course, they created the spat by dictating Dorian's activities and then by broadcasting them—and, in any event, Andamana is a paid participant in the whole scheme. The result is that Dorian's life is no longer his own, a separate Dorian Gray, a doppelganger, has been created in the press, one who is apparently living a life of public licentiousness. The flesh and blood Dorian Gray cannot extricate his identity from the mirror image that Mabuse has created in print. A fly caught in a web, Dorian struggles to defend his honor to the woman he loves, but it's a battle he is destined to lose. Except . . .

Accidentally, one of Mabuse's photographers has snapped a picture of the media baron herself orchestrating Dorian Gray's long strange trip through the Berlin subculture. The photo represents a severe risk of exposure. Its existence threatens not only Operation Mirror, but Mabuse's whole empire by extension. She has tripped herself up: it is her own spies acting on her instructions who have created positive proof of her misdeeds.

The Little Doctor acquires the negative and slips it to Dorian, who in turn confronts Andamana with it, and she confesses to being in on the arrangement. For the first time, Dorian is taking independent action, and it directly threatens Mabuse's control. To protect herself from exposure, Mabuse disposes of the Little Doctor (a fake suicide, an echo of the fate of Alan Campbell in Wilde's book) and Andamana (stabbed in the opera with a real, not prop, knife) and steals the photo back from Dorian. Dorian knows that he is next to be killed.

It is at this point that any residual pretense to narrative logic flies out the window. The film barrels ahead into a series of mutually contradictory conclusions, which can only be reconciled with one another depending on one's interpretation of the film's message.

In the first sequence, one of Mabuse's gang manages to secret yet another copy of the incriminating photo to Dorian. She then assists him in breaking into Mabuse's underground lair. Brandishing the same knife that killed his beloved Andamana, Dorian attacks and kills Mabuse and her editors (all of whom are wearing rooster masks for no readily apparent reason).

Suddenly, the film negates the preceding sequence and veers off in the opposite direction. Dorian Gray cannot have killed Dr. Mabuse, since it is Mabuse we see laying Dorian's earthly remains to rest in a solemn ceremony witnessed by her editors.

Scarcely has this new version of the ending begun than the film negates it as well. That cannot be Dorian Gray's body in Dorian Gray's tomb because the real Dorian Gray is alive and well and maniacally steering the red sportster Mabuse gave him. He ruthlessly runs down Mabuse and every one of her henchmen, an orgy of violence that is quite literally overkill, since everyone in this scene has been killed at least once in the immediately preceding minutes.



Who has killed who? Dorian kills Mabuse kills Dorian kills Mabuse. All are true, in a sense, because while Dorian kills Mabuse (which happens in both versions of the climax), Mabuse has killed Dorian—the real Dorian, Dorian's identity. As the final rendition of the climax reveals, Dorian Gray is now Dr. Mabuse. The credits roll, and we see that Dorian has now replaced Mabuse as head of the media empire, and intends to continue his/her sensational exploitation of self-manufactured news.

"We have new headlines," says Dorian/Mabuse, "more sensational than the old."

To be Dr. Mabuse's victim is the same thing as being Dr. Mabuse's heir. The merging of male and female personas in Dorian's body, too, has been prefigured by the casting of female von Lehndorff in male drag.

However, on a strictly literal level—on the customary level of narrative appreciation—Dorian Gray's finale is incomprehensible and nonsensical. Ottinger's characters are for the most part ciphers, whose function it is to strike poses and bear significant names. Dorian Gray is hardly a sympathetic victim; he's an idiot playboy who deserves his fate. Andamana is somewhat more sympathetic—an actress hired to play a part, she is simply unfortunate to have been hired by the Forces of Evil. However, despite being played by Ottinger's erstwhile lover, she is almost without exception photographed in long shot, and it's hard to identify with an indistinct figure on the distant horizon. While the Little Doctor plays a critical role in the narrative flow and seemingly espouses Ottinger's own opinions, she considers his character insignificant enough to not even identify the actor playing the part in the credits.

As for Mabuse, Seyrig's distinguished performance merely enlivens a fairly dull role. Her sinister activities don't threaten the safety of the world or lives of millions. Instead, she is polluting the integrity of the news media. To the extent that Ottinger's film plays as a media critique, its satirical barbs have been long since overtaken by the real-life media scandals of the end of the 20th century. In the age of Matt Drudge, When Pets Go Bad, accusations of paparazzi hounding Princess Di to her death, and the almost endless parade of once-respected journalists caught fabricating a story (even CNN and Time and NBC News have made public apologies for false "news"), Mabuse's Operation Mirror is awfully tame by comparison.

Instead, the true strength of *THE IMAGE OF DORIAN GRAY IN THE YELLOW PRESS* lies in its bold visuals, which Ottinger delivers in spades. Working with a spare budget, Ottinger's inventive mind fills her screen with memorable and frequently disquieting imagery. Unlike Ottinger's film is playing by a completely different set of rules than any of the films usually discussed in this magazine.

Ulrike Ottinger operates in a separate sphere altogether. Her uncompromisingly personal visions are produced and exhibited independently from the commercial film industry. Her primary audience is in art museums and film festivals. *DORIAN GRAY* has never received any commercial distribution in America, and is available for screening only through the efforts of the nonprofit organization Women Make Movies.

Yet Ottinger is not quite the complete outsider. She is a highly acclaimed director of multifarious skills. She writes her own screenplays, which she directs and produces, while also serving as cinematographer, set designer, and more as the need and occasion arises. She is one of the rarefied few female directors in Europe to be known internationally, and although her works are relegated to art house screenings, they are enthusiastically received in that limited venue.

The magazine *Artforum* raves, "There is no other filmmaker." *The Village Voice* writes, "Watching her films is like traveling through an undiscovered country of marvels, a



Delphine Seyrig (left) is best known to horror fans for playing Countess Elizabeth Bathory in the stylish *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* (1971), but in *THE IMAGE OF DORIAN GRAY IN THE YELLOW PRESS* (1984) she's Dr. Mabuse!

journey alternately dazzling, infuriating, hilarious, and rewarding." *The Boston Globe* says, "Ottinger's films are marked by their wild imagery; celebrations of misfit characters, narrative looseness and sometimes infuriating length." *The New York Blade* admires that "Ottinger has succeeded in crossing nearly every cultural line." *The Los Angeles Times* calls her works "the personal vision personified."

For every critic who lavishes such words as "sumptuous" and "transgressive" on Ottinger, though, the words "difficult" and "elitist" are not far behind. When *Dorian Gray* was first shown at the Berlin Film Fest in February 1984, *Variety* acknowledged Ottinger's strengths and recognized the complex cultural and artistic traditions feeding into the film, but the otherwise sympathetic reviewer nevertheless concluded, "After two-and-a-half hours of static pictures and operatic poses, one assumes he has seen a collection of rushes—and waits for the film to be cut for commercial release. But no, Ottinger apparently cannot part with images of her own creation, and thus as a filmmaker overtaxes the patience of her audience."

Her contempt for the commercial film industry and refusal to compromise so much as a single frame has kept her works—the best and the worst alike, from being seen by any wider numbers than a tight circle of intellectuals and art theorists. Her ideas can have little effect on mainstream society when she merely preaches to the converted. Ottinger makes films for herself.

"In Germany also they don't understand my films so well," she laments in a 1989 interview for *LA Weekly*, but yet she resists changing her approach in any way to make her ideas better understood. "I think my audiences could be bigger," she complains in a 1991 interview in *Cineaste*. However, one of the hardest stumbling blocks to finding mainstream commercial distribution for her films is their patience-straining length, and she will neither cut down her finished films nor agree to reign in her indulgence on future projects.

Instead of accepting any responsibility for limiting her own audience, she finds fault with the distributors for their bottom-line mentality. In addition to blaming distributors for their bourgeois tastes, she also criticizes the German government for not supporting artists, as she defines the term. "They work with stars, not artists," she says of government subsidies.

She blames, too, the audience, for its ignorant tastes: "The daily regimen of many hours of TV training limits the

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# Monroe in Glorious Black & White

If 20th Century Fox has a lock on Technicolor Marilyn, MGM Home Video has cornered the black-and-white franchise with two essential Monroe outings: *SOME LIKE IT HOT* (1959) and *THE MISFITS* (1961).

If Billy Wilder's *SOME LIKE IT HOT* isn't the perfect movie comedy, it's only because, "Nobody's perfect." Monroe is Sugar Kane, vocalist with Sweet Sue and Her Society Syncopators, an all-girl band with two jokes in the deck: Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon as a couple of musicians on the lam—in drag—from dapper gangster Spats Columbo (a self-mocking George Raft).

Along for the laughs are Pat O'Brien as a tough cop named Mulligan, and Joe E. Brown as Osgood Fielding III, a millionaire with an open mind to match his wallet.

Picture quality is good, if not—well, perfect, and the extras include a fascinating interview with Tony Curtis, conducted by Leonard Maltin, a series of trailers for Wilder films, a "hall of memories" with behind-the-scenes material, and a short featurette with the actresses who played the band members.

In sharp contrast to the slapstick shenanigans of *SOME LIKE IT HOT*, John Huston's *THE MISFITS* is virtually a parade of the walking wounded. Montgomery Clift is in shaky shape, as he was for most of his film performances following a near-fatal car accident while making *RAINTREE COUNTY* (1957), and the picture marked the last completed roles for both Monroe and Clark Gable.

*THE MISFITS* in a modern-day Western, short on action and long on dialogue, much of it portentous and all of it written by Arthur Miller. Monroe plays Roslyn, a divorcee in love with an over-the-hill cowboy, Gay Langland (Gable), who plans to round up wild horses for slaughter. Roslyn conspires with another cowpoke, Perce Howland (Clift), to free the herd, threatening the enterprise and her relationship with Langland.

Picture quality is good, and the film is never less than interesting. *THE MISFITS* would be worthwhile for no other reason than to see Gable, Clift, and Monroe, the sort of stars they simply don't make any more (You don't get supporting players of the caliber of Thelma Ritter, Eh Wallach, or Estelle Winwood, either.) Round up both these films!

—Drew Sullivan



"I just love finding new places to wear diamonds!" Howard Hawks' *GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES* (1953) gave Marilyn Monroe her signature role as fortune-hunting Lorelei Lee, and also provided Jane Russell with her best film opportunity, as Lorelei's sardonic pal, Dorothy Shaw.

## INCANDESCENT ICON

*Continued from page 29*

mance that was certainly deserving of an Oscar—which sadly, Marilyn never won. There is absolutely nothing wrong with Fox's restoration, though the box mislabels the film's aspect ratio. Despite the 1.85:1 enhanced print, *BUS STOP* is preserved in a very, very wide original CinemaScope aspect of 2.55:1, and is a pleasure to behold the film.

*HOW TO MARRY A MILLIONAIRE* (1953) stars three of the screen's most glamorous leading ladies: Betty Grable, Marilyn Monroe, and Lauren Bacall. They're three gold diggers who put all they have (and then some) into renting a penthouse apartment as a front to snag millionaire husbands. Bacall plays off her image as a Warner Bros. film noir star, going so far as to make reference to husband Humphrey Bogart. (Grable does the same with Harry James.) It's harmless fluff, guaranteed to bring smiles, if not laughs, to your lips. And if you love classic movie music, the precredits sequence has Alfred Newman conducting the enormous 20th Century Fox Orchestra in a brisk playing of Newman's own classic composition "Street Scene," from the 1931 film of the same name.

Had Marilyn made no other film, her work in Howard Hawks' *GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES* (1953) would have insured her screen immortality. The quintessential Monroe performance as Lorelei Lee is in a class by itself, and the star got to create one of the most memorable musical sequences ever put to celluloid, "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend." The film is all about the relationship between two unlikely friends, Lorelei and gal pal Dorothy Shaw, played to devilish perfection by top-billed Jane Russell. (Russell has a musical highlight of her own, engaging in some feisty maneuvers with a startlingly flesh clad bevy of

sinewy male dancers, asking the musical question, "Is There Anyone Here for Love?") Hawks never patronizes *Les Girls*, and, having previously used Monroe in *MONKEY BUSINESS* (1952), had the good sense to star the buxom blonde in her first true musical role. The film's stunning Technicolor hues are evident from the opening 20th Century Fox logo, in which the spotlight beams shine in a variety of beautiful pastel tones.

The best transfer falls to the weakest entry in the set, Walter Lang's vaudevilian family musical, *THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS* (1954). This isn't even Marilyn's movie; it belongs to Ethel Merman! Far better choices would have been the Technicolor film noir *NIAGARA* (1953) or the CinemaScope Western *RIVER OF NO RETURN* (1954).

Capping off the set is Billy Wilder's imaginative *THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH* (1955), a wonderful film experience starring Marilyn as the girl (that's her only identification) of Tom Ewell's many manly fantasies. Monroe's first-rate line readings deftly tread the line between dumb-blonde caricature and brilliant-blonde characterization, but any blonde who harbors an affinity for a certain Gill Man can hardly be called dumb. Yes, this is the film with Marilyn's white skirt billowing about her waist, as she stands above a subway grating following a movie house showing of *CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON* (1954). This title also boasts the lion's share of Bonus Features, with the addition of two deleted scenes and the American Movie Classics' tele documentary *BACKSTORY: THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH*.

*The Diamond Collection* makes a strong case for those who consider Marilyn Monroe one of the screen's brightest stars, though the argument would have

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# CLASSIFIED

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### DICK SMITH

*Continued from page 73*

portrait they used, and you can see how dumb it looks. There's Doran staring at this big painting and there's this ludicrous looking monster in the painting. It really looks goofy! (Laughs)

**SS:** How long did it take you to make it?  
**DS:** Oh, hell, it probably took me all of a day. As I say, it was something I did very quickly, because that's the way you had to work in TV, anyway. Every week there was something new. The work I did on **THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY** was one of those things that serendipitously worked out rather well. I was really very pleased with it. The only thing that disappointed me was the fact that I was sucker enough to give it to James Warren, who gave it to Forry Ackerman.

**SS:** Is it in the Ackermansion now?

**DS:** People have seen it off and on, but what's happened to it I really don't know. So... it's gone as far as I'm concerned. I'll never see it again.

### THE NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 23*

Fritz Lang's lavish 1959 adventure **THE TIGER OF ESCHNAPUR**, and its concluding chapter **THE INDIAN TOMB**, are newly available on DVD from Image Entertainment for \$29.99 each. The beautiful Debra Paget costars in these colorful features, which were heavily influenced by classic serials and are now available in their rarely seen original full-length versions.

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Gone, but never to be forgotten: film critic Pauline Kae; singers Betty Everett, Mimi Fariña, Aalyah Houghton, Ernie K. Doe, Johnny Russell, and Ron Townson; harmonica king Larry Adler; author Poul Anderson; makeup master John Cham-

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bers; special effects artist A D Flowers; composers James Bernard and Jack Elliott; screenwriters Lawrence B Marcus, Lester Pine, and George F. Slavin; voice actors Dave Barry and Lorenzo Music; producer Samuel Z. Arkoff, director Alan Rafkin; actors Steve Barton, Julie Bishop, Troy Donohue, Gerald Gordon, Jane Greer, Anne Haney, Molly Lamont, Joe Lynch, Philippe Leotard, Kenneth MacDonald, Dorothy McGuire, Giancarlo Prete, Francisco Rabal, Walter Reed, Kim Stanley, Harry Townes, Dame Dorothy Tutin, Tom Watson, Victor Wong, and *Scarlet Street* fave Kathleen Freeman and the victims of the September 11, 2001, tragedies, who include producer David Angell and actor Berry Berenson.

Send The Hound your questions, comments and compliments via email to [TheNewsHound@yahoo.com](mailto:TheNewsHound@yahoo.com).



### INCANDESCENT ICON

*Continued from page 76*

been even stronger had Fox included one of her dramas, rather than focusing solely on the lighter Monroe vehicles. Still, there's always hope for a second box set, isn't there?



### THE DIAMOND COLLECTION

20th Century Fox  
\$79.98 complete  
**BUS STOP**  
**GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES**  
**HOW TO MARRY A MILLIONAIRE**  
**THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH**  
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### SCREEN AND SCREEN

*Continued from page 33*

anemic. I recommend switching the receiver to CD and playing some decadent Euro loungecore for an alternative soundtrack. No doubt something like "Vampyr- os Lesbos Sexadelic Dance Party" would have been right up Von Stroheim's alley.

—Erich Kuersten

### THE SCARLET EMPRESS

The Criterion Collection

\$29.95

Josef von Sternberg's "relentless excursion into style," the sixth of his seven films with Marlene Dietrich, has come to DVD from Criterion. It may not be the legendary filmmaker's best film, but **THE SCARLET EMPRESS** (1934) is near the top of the list and one of the most visually stunning of his works. It is certainly the most excessive and the biggest (the titles boast "and a supporting cast of 1000 players")—and, for some, the most insane.

Supposedly based on "a diary of Catherine II" that was "arranged" into a screenplay by Manuel Komroff (who only wrote one other film), but it's really all Sternberg—the great man himself penned the typically convoluted intertitles that link the action and, it's claimed, leant his hand to conducting the orchestra for the lush W. Franke Harling tapestry of Tchaikovsky and Wagner in the climactic scenes. Yes, it's the story of Catherine the Great, and, yes, it's set in Russia, but it's every inch Sternberg's Catherine and his vision of Russia.

The director's take was that Russia had much in common with America. Hence, the amusing casting of the deliberately grating American Louise Dresser as the Empress Elizabeth. ("This is the order of St. Catherine. May you both wear it in good health and be careful it doesn't

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## SCREEN AND SCREEN

*Continued from page 77*

scratch you") Another Sternberg idea was that the palaces should be rustic—a cross between a castle and a barn—and the results are startling. Huge rooms look like gigantic log cabins, with timbers for walls and doors that require six people to open and close, all filled with elaborately crude décor and looming grotesque statuary by sculptor Peter Ballbusch. In 1934, no one had ever seen anything like it. In 2001, it is still unique.

Apart from Dietrich (who ultimately becomes like the rest) and John Lodge (grandson of Henry Cabot Lodge and future governor of Connecticut), the characters all verge on caricature. The early scenes in Germany (partly shot on redressed sets from 1932's *LOVE ME TONIGHT*) are the closest thing in the film to normalcy, and they serve mostly to set up the abnormal Russia into which Catherine is thrust. It's a world populated by strange characters who behave even more strangely, especially Sam Jaffe as Peter III. Sternberg's Peter isn't merely feeble-minded. He's a major loon, given to boring voyeuristic holes through walls, playing with toy soldiers, drilling real troops inside the palace, and sporting an insane grimace. The characterization is at once funny and chilling. Even more chilling is the fact that when Catherine seizes power, she takes on the same glassy-eyed look and smile.

*THE SCARLET EMPRESS* is a bitter, beautiful, exhilarating, and often funny

film. (Just watch Catherine's eyes as she reviews the troops.) Stylistically, it's Sternberg at the height of his powers—never before had he quite so successfully filled the "dead space" on his frame with veils, banners, curtains, décor, and smoke as he does here. Never before had he dared hold shots quite so long or lay dissolve on top of dissolve so relentlessly. As befits his most musical film, the results seem less created than composed.

The Criterion DVD presents his monumental vision beautifully. Rarely has any Paramount film of this period looked so good. The contrast is beautiful and captures every nuance of Sternberg's astonishing monochromatic fantasia. There's a bit of grain, but that's to be expected—movies were never shot with the idea that you'd be watching them from a distance of a few feet. The extras include a photo gallery and the BBC short, *THE WORLD OF JOSEF VON STERNBERG*. There's an interesting Sternberg tribute by Jack Smith and somewhat shortsighted notes by Robin Wood.

Ken Hanke

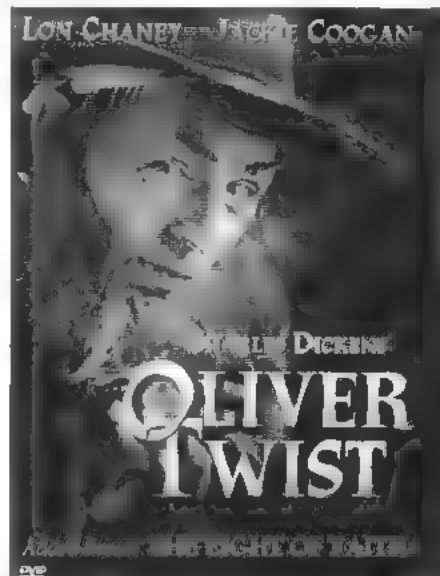
**OLIVER TWIST/  
THE LIGHT OF FAITH**  
Image Entertainment  
\$24.99

The sixth adaptation of Charles Dickens' story of the orphaned child who suffers mightily the first 10 years of his life is brought to DVD courtesy of Image Entertainment. Director Frank Lloyd was no stranger to bringing big, sprawling novels to the silent screen. In 1917 alone he directed lavish versions of *A TALE OF TWO CITIES* and *LES MISÉRABLES*, and later in his career would direct the classics *MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY* (1935) and *BLOOD ON THE SUN* (1945). For his version of *OLIVER TWIST* (1922), he had the star of the day, the boy wonder, the Kid himself... Jackie Coogan! Still, this version is probably better known for one of the supporting players. A year before he would claim immortality as *THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME* (1923), Lon Chaney embodied the scene-stealing criminal, Fagin.

Subtlety is unknown, but the picture packs quite a punch with its excess. Coogan has one of the most expressive faces of any child actors and Chaney's makeup for Fagin ranks second only to his sinister portrayal. However, the aspect that sur-

prises most is the violence. Coogan is literally thrown around by the parade of criminals he encounters, and the murder of a prostitute still hits hard.

Also on this disc is *THE LIGHT OF FAITH* (also 1922), an edited, 33-minute version of the eight-reel *THE LIGHT IN THE DARK*. Directed by Clarence Brown, the story follows the quest for the healing power of the Holy Grail. Chaney plays a criminal (again) in love with the girl who has moved into his apartment complex. She takes ill and, when she sees in the paper that her millionaire ex-boyfriend has



found the Holy Grail, she tells Chaney about its healing powers (told in a flashback that was originally filmed in color). Chaney steals the grail to restore her, but is apprehended by the law for the theft.

Both films are color tinted and feature musical accompaniment. Given their age and nonblockbuster status, it is amazing that the films exist at all! *OLIVER TWIST* is in sore need of restoration. Missing frames, scratches, fading, speckling—you name it, it's suffering from it, but it's watchable and the story and performances still fascinate. *LIGHT OF FAITH* looks amazingly good. While it, too, is missing the odd frame here and there, the image is infinitely steadier than *OLIVER TWIST* and scratches and other blemishes are nowhere near as prevalent. All in all, this is a great double feature from Image!

—Jeff Allen

## DORIAN MEETS MABUSE

*Continued from page 75*

visual habits of most people so sharply to television conventions that they are effectively unable to understand any other visual and aural language," she writes in her 1983 essay "The Pressure to Make Genre Films." "If one tries to use different possibilities... to reach a general audience, one is almost bound to fail. The resistance is absolute."

In other words, everyone is wrong but Ottinger. Were she happy working on the extreme periphery of the film world, crafting her unique products without any strings attached, but understanding that her freedom and her poverty were two sides of the same coin, there would be no problem. But Ottinger deeply resents her exile from the film community, and is quick to identify her enemies.

In the film of her own life, Ottinger casts herself in the unenviable position of permanent outcast. She is the angry voice outside the studio gates, her fist raised insolently in the air as she rails against the injustice of her exile. She has been unable, or unwilling, either to accept her marginality, or to cleave a middle path of compromise and artistic innovation.

Ulrike Ottinger is her own worst enemy, and her career-long spectacle of self-destruction mirrors the fate of both Dr. Mabuse and Dorian Gray: obsessed with exploiting the images she fashions, she is powerless when they overtake and subsume her. The image of Ulrike Ottinger in the public press is a difficult and inflexible artist, forever condemned to be a spectator at her own marginalization.





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# THE BROTHERHOOD

Vampires are  
the legend...  
but not here.

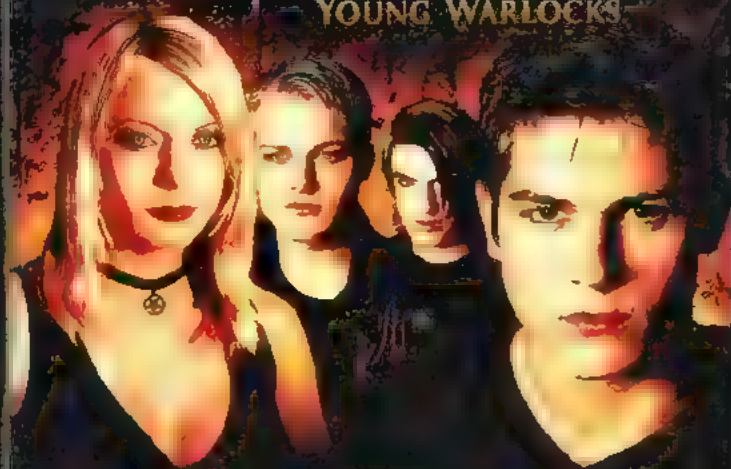


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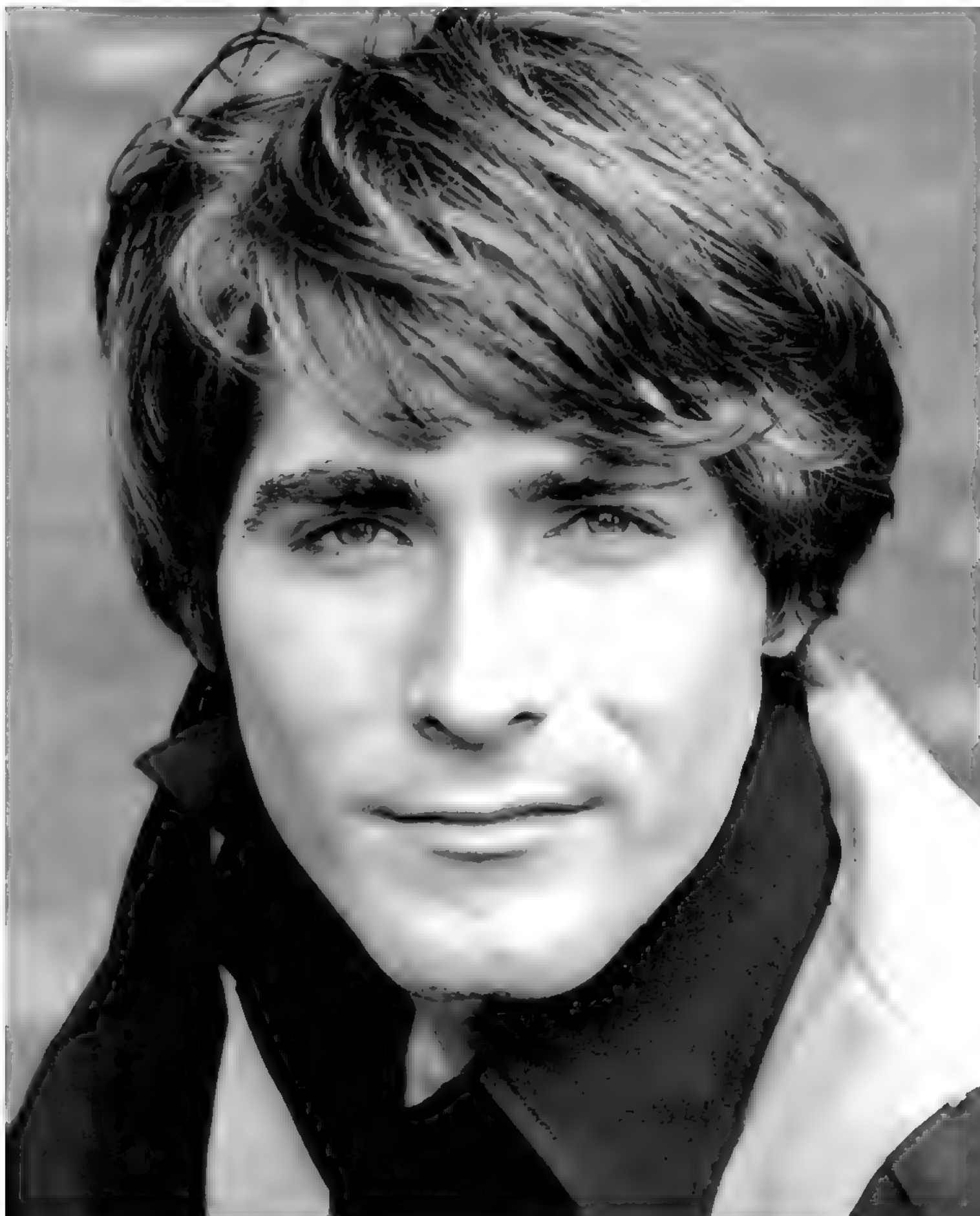






















# "The MENACE"

















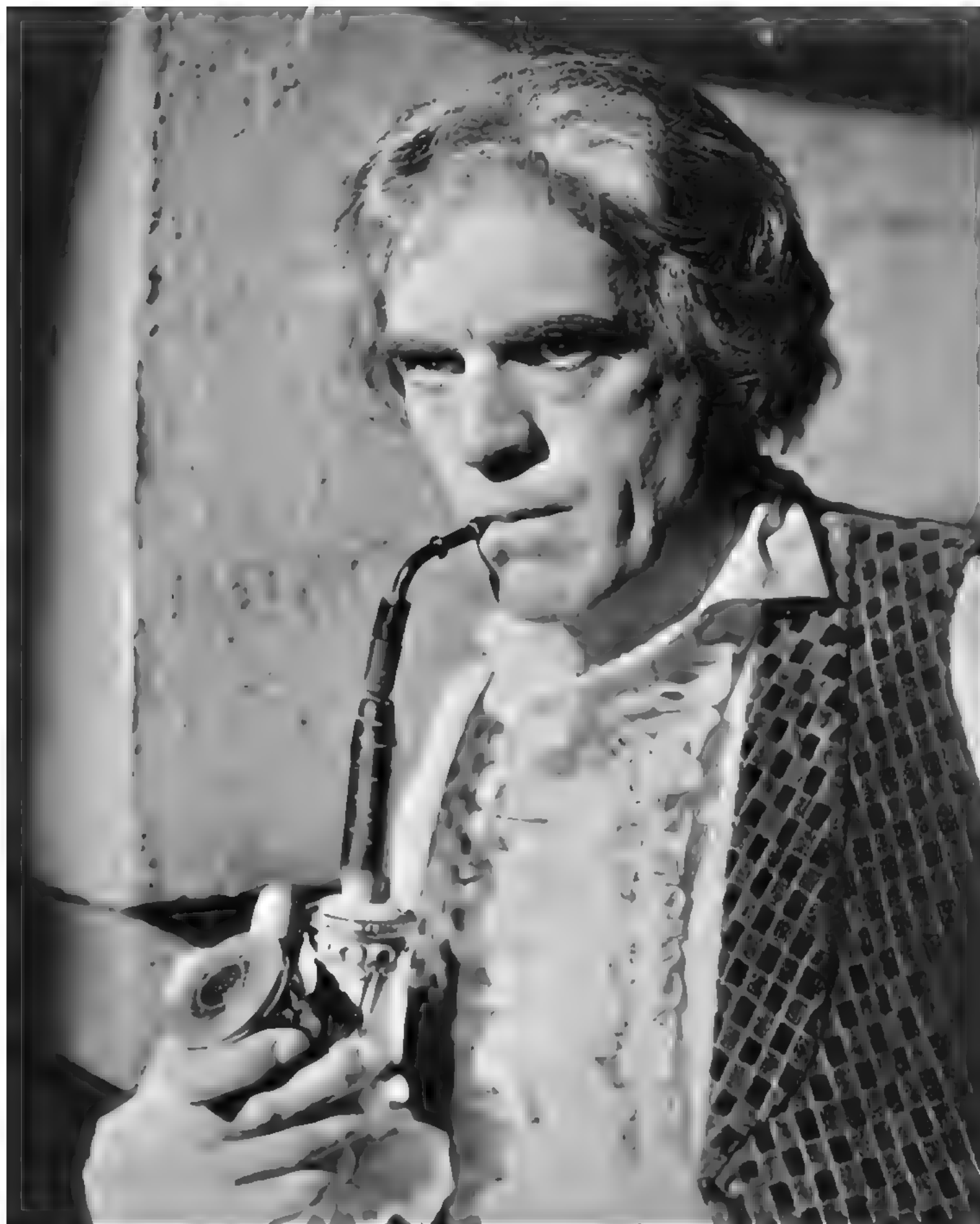
# "The MENACE"



















Jack  
**HOLT**

in "**BEHIND the MASK**"

A COLUMBIA PICTURE





Jack  
HOLT

in "BEHIND the MASK"

A COLUMBIA PICTURE



A SLINKING  
FIEND

SKULKING  
TERROR

MAD

*Murder!*



A  
COLUMBIA  
PICTURE

Jack  
**HOLT**  
*Behind  
the  
Mask*



With  
**BORIS KARLOFF**  
*Constance* **CUMMINGS**

JO SWERLING

DOROTHY HOWE

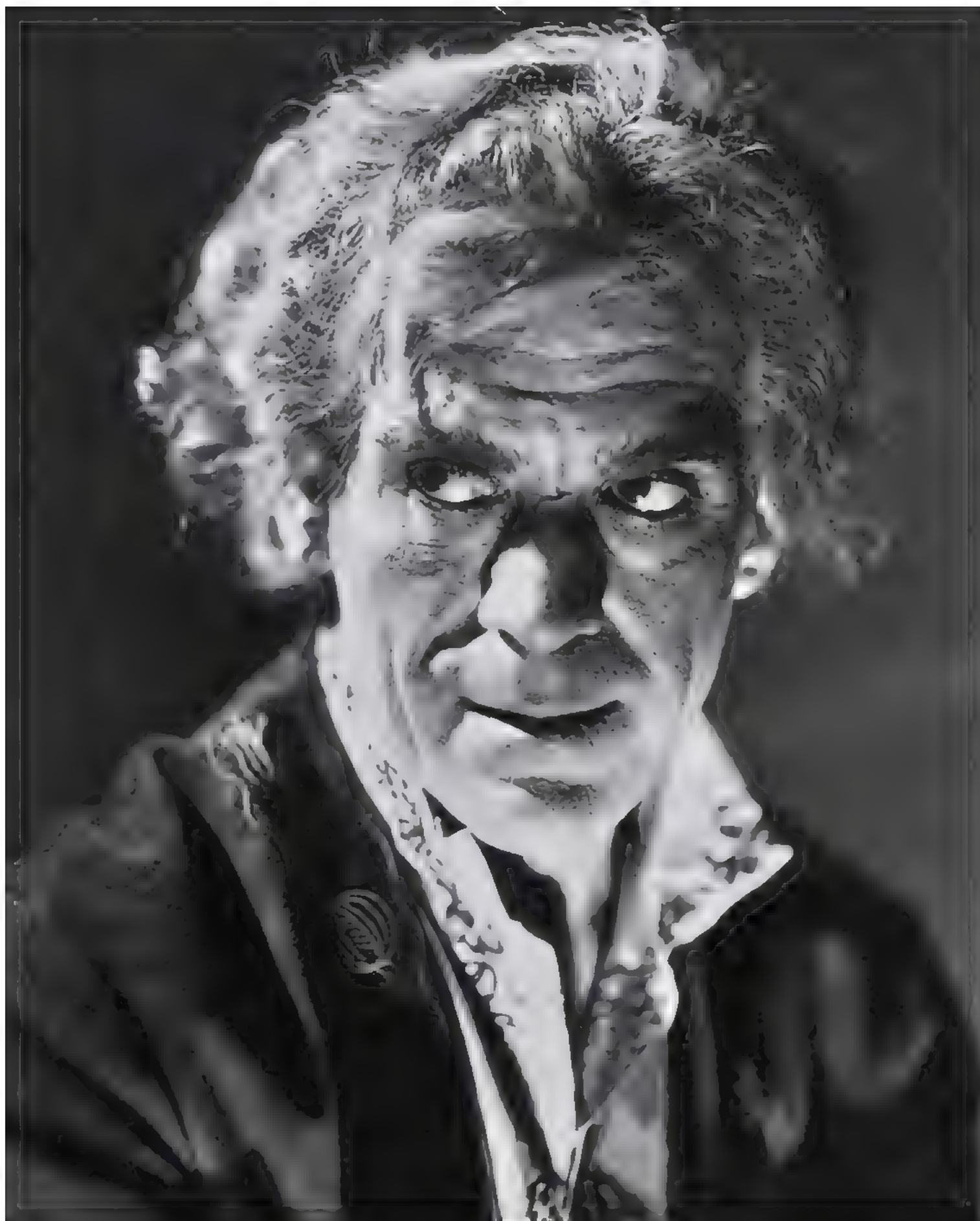
DIRECTED BY JOHN FRANCIS DILLON



































































© 1984  
Robert Harloff

















Jungle Madness!  
Tropic Love!

JACK  
HOLT

*in*

# BLACK MOON

FAY WRAY

DOROTHY  
BURGESS

*From the Cosmopolitan Magazine novel*

*by CLEMENTS RIPLEY*

Directed by ROY WILLIAM NEILL

*a Columbia picture*





*What was this unseen menace  
that Struck in the dark?*

# Night of

# TERROR

with  
BELA "dracula"  
LUGOSI

SALLY BLANE  
WALLACE FORD  
TULLY MARSHALL

from the Story by  
WILLARD MAC  
Directed by  
BENJAMIN STOLOFF

A COLUMBIA PICTURE





# *the* 9<sup>th</sup> Guest

A Park Avenue penthouse—eight guests for dinner—the host never appeared—the ninth guest arrived—confusion and fear gripped the household—mystery lurked behind each curtain—wild things happened—every one suspected—but *Clara* found the key in the library romance that pulled them toward Broadway for months.



From the magnificent  
play by  
**OWEN DAVIS**  
Now, from *Where and How*  
of America's greatest dramatists





















ne verrückte Reise in die Zuk

ANDAHL BERGMANN • HARRISON MULLER • GORDON MITCHE

sowie Gith Kester, David Goss und David Brandon  
Produzenten: Helen und Eduard Sarul • Regie: Avi Nesher • Produziert von: Renato Dondi • Musik: Rick Wackermann  
Kamera: Sandro Mancos • Drehbuch: Avi Nesher • Schnitt: Nicholas Wenthworth







































COLUMBIA



Marian  
MARSH  
Ralph  
BELLAMY

EN  
El  
HOMBRE QUE  
VIVIO DOS VECES



THEIR HOST WAS A SPECTRE  
THEIR HOSTESS DISASTER !



with  
**DONALD COOK**  
**GENEVIEVE TOBIN**

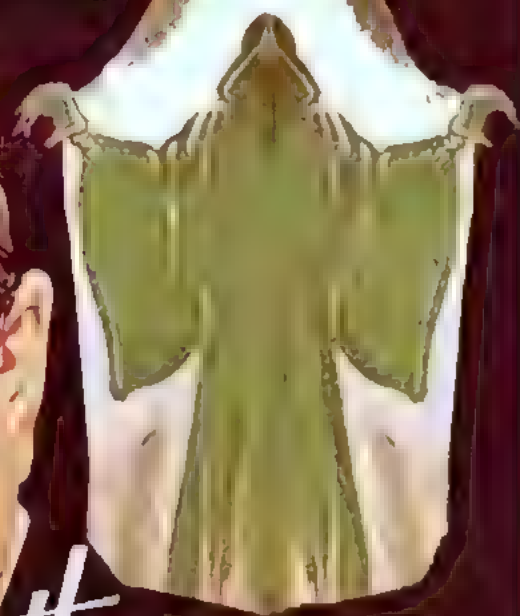
*From the play by Owen Davis*  
*Based upon the book by Glen Bristow and Bruce Manning*

*Directed by* ROY WILLIAM NEILL

**A COLUMBIA**



**EIGHT** were invited ... but  
death came unasked !



*the*  
**9<sup>th</sup>**  
**GUEST**

*Donald* **COOK**  
*Genevieve* **TOBIN**



*Columbia*







COLUMBIA FILMS S A

*Ralph* **BELLAMY**  
*Marian* **MARSH**



# L'HOMME QUI VECUT DEUX FOIS

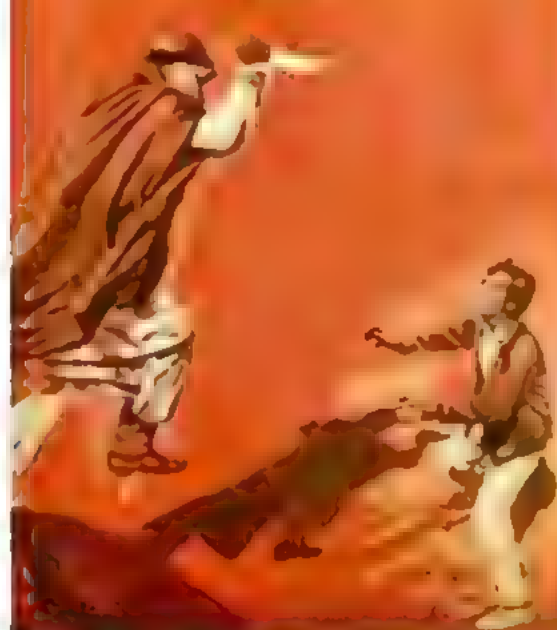
THURSTON HALL. ISABEL JEWEL. NANA BRYANT  
RÉALISATION DE HARRY LACHMAN

COLUMBIA FILMS S.A. 20 Rue Troyon PARIS (17<sup>e</sup>)





JOHN RICHARDSON OLIVKA BEROVA  
EDWARD JUDD



# LA DONNA VENUTA DAL PASSATO

...NOEL WILLMAN ...COLIN BLAKELY

PRODOTTO DA AIDA YOUNG  
SCRITTO DA CLIFF OWEN  
MONTAGGIO DA PETER O'DONNELL  
REGIA DI H. ROSE HARRISON

COLORE DE LUXE

UNA SETTE ARTS HAMMER PRODUCTION

26











JOHN RICHARDSON  
OLINKA BEROVA  
EDWARD JUDD

IN

# THE VENGEANCE OF

# THE


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NEW STAR  
OLINKA BEROVA











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BELIEVE COLUMBIA HAS A HOT BOX OFFICE ATTRACTION IN BEHIND THE MASK RESULTS HERE PROVE THIS STATEMENT INSPIRE OF TERRIBLE BAD SHOW WEATHER INCLUDING WORST FOG EVER SEEN IN SPRINGFIELD AND THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT AGAINST TREMENDOUS DRAWING CARDS AT OTHER HOUSES WE ARE STANDING THEM UP SHOULD BE RECORD WEEK CONGRATULATIONS=

AL ANDERS BIJOU THEATRE..

**HIT!**

Behind the hedge stand the forces of law, catching with the coming of a bad mood!  
 Behind the mask lurk the forces of diabolical evil!  
 When these two forces meet through the medium of the screen, the result is a "shocker" which will jar your box-office out of that...



**Jack HOLT**  
*in*

**BEHIND the MASK**

**BORIS ("Frankenstein") KARLOFF**  
**CONSTANCE CUMMINGS**

Story, adaptation and dialogue by Jo Swerling  
 Continuity by Dorothy Howell  
 Directed by JOHN FRANCIS DILLON  
 A BREATHTAKING "SHOCKER"  
 From the story "In The Secret Service"







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4-86



















